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To Althea, Who Loves Me Not

By Richard Middleton

What sentries guard your gates, oh, jealous heart,
  What men-at-arms the ramparts of your pride?
Pleading can move you not, nor any art
  Of words made eloquent, who late defied
The summons of your own hot blood to yield
  To clamorous love, for still your walls within
Your passions stay controlled; on what fierce field
  Will you match Fate at last, and lose, and win?

Alas! that on that day I may not prove
  The valour of my dreams, and flinging far
The splendid banner of triumphant love
  Conquer the world and sate the gods with war:
Having no men-at-arms but these my songs
  That claim no skill in battle, I must wait
The coming of a king to whom belongs
  The mastery in all things passionate.

When joyous in defeat you will lay bare
  Your secret treasuries, and bid him take
Of all your jewels that which is most fair
  To crown the victor stooping for your sake
Accomplished love's own pauper, duly fired
  By passion to win this knowledge on your breast:
That you, whom gods might covet when desired,
  Are something less than human when possessed.

Think, Pride, before you hate me! Now I say
  Your body's beauty, unadorned by dreams
Of passion-cheated lovers, would not stay
  My hunger for one hour; for yet there gleams
Deep in my heart a fairer form than this
  That I have given you as a compassionate dole,
Lips that I would not, cheeks I cannot kiss,
  The unattainable mistress of my soul.

If man but loved perfection, I would mark
  Your ugliness—your mean, ignoble mind,
Greedy of common things, that in the dark
  Feeds on itself, contented to be blind,
While men dare God for sight; and I should say,
  "What's this she-thing to me, who can create
A thousand better puppets in a day?—
  Puppets with souls, better to love or hate!"

But you, unlovely and imperfect thing,
  Beyond all reason empress of my love,
Change not at all; though even while I sing
  Worlds die and are created, still you move
Sole mistress of your imperturbable hour
  As though that hour held all; and I, who have
By right of song strange kingdoms in my power,
  Leave all for this, the least thing that I crave.

Men die for dreams, proud creature, while you heap
  About the blue-veined marble of your skin
Those lustrous tresses that the hands of sleep
  Scarce dare to tangle. While you search within
Your polished glass for flattering news of all
  You hold most dear, from out the hopeless fight
The souls of men seek forlorn burial,
  And eyes that praised you range the eternal night.

And must we dream of love who on a day
  Shall spread abroad his shapen wings and bless
Our hearts with news of heaven; though we pay
  The price of your usurious wantonness
In murdered dreams and lives unjustified,
  Still, still we seek him only, that at last
Our faith may make eternity our bride
  And earthly tyrannies be overpast.

TO ALTHEA, WHO LOVES ME NOT

Comb those black locks of yours and watch your glass,
  And when all other pleasures fail you, pray!
Queen of an hour, who with that hour shall pass,
  Lo! all your hoarded beauty is decay;
For Death shall make your little cunning vain,
  And your insentient dust, too pure God wot
To be the mother of babes, shall come again
  Back to the teeming earth that needs it not.

I can forgive your pride, the decent veil
  That guards serene vacuity from shame;
And that my passion's eloquence should fail
  To move you irks me not; but that the name
Of love should be dishonoured in your guise,
  That to this hateful and contaminate end
I should have brought my faith, my spirit cries
  Pardon of love, and makes this harsh amend.

Now, hate me if you will; but well I know
  The tale your matchless vanity will unfold:
"My dear, the poor mad poet loved me so,
  He wrote sad things about me, better told,
Perhaps, in prose, and best not told at all."
  Ah, Pride, you triumph ever. If you will,
Take this as my heart's offering, for withal,
  Damn you, in some queer way I love you still!

Two Poems

By W. H. Davies

JOY SUPREME

The birds are pirates of her notes,
  The blossoms steal her face's light;
The stars in ambush lie all day,
  To take her glances for the night.
Her voice can shame rain-pelted leaves;
  Young robin has no notes as sweet
In autumn, when the air is still,
  And all the other birds are mute.

When I set eyes on ripe, red plums
  That seem a sin and shame to bite,
Such are her lips, which I would kiss,
  And still would keep before my sight.
When I behold proud gossamer
  Make silent billows in the air,
Then think I of her head's fine stuff,
  Finer than gossamer's, I swear.

The miser has his joy, with gold
  Beneath his pillow in the night;
My head shall lie on soft warm hair,
  And misers know not that delight.
Captains that own their ships can boast
  Their joy to feel the rolling brine—
But I shall lie near her, and feel
  Her soft warm bosom swell on mine.

TWO POEMS

A WOMAN'S CHARMS

My purse is yours, Sweet Heart, for I
Can count no coins with you close by;
I scorn like sailors them, when they
Have drawn on shore their deep-sea pay;
Only my thoughts I value now,
Which, like the simple glowworms, throw
Their beams to greet thee bravely, Love—
Their glorious light in Heaven above.
Since I have felt thy waves of light,
Beating against my soul, the sight
Of gems from Afric's continent
Move me to no great wonderment.
Since I, Sweet Heart, have known thine hair,
The fur of ermine, sable, bear,
Or silver fox, for me can keep
No more to praise than common sheep.
Though ten Isaiahs' souls were mine,
They could not sing such charms as thine.
Two little hands that show with pride,
Two timid, little feet that hide;
Two eyes no dark Senoras show
Their burning like in Mexico;
Two coral gates wherein is shown
Your queen of charms, on a white throne;
Your queen of charms, the lovely smile
That on its white throne could beguile
The mastiff from his gates in hell;
Who by no whine or bark could tell
His masters what thing made him go—
And countless other charms I know.
October's hedge has far less hues
Than thou hast charms from which to choose.

Two Poems

By E. S. Lorimer

THE WAKE

God :—

Morag lying on the shore so lonely,
  Deep in death-dreams,
Morag, I prowling round thy coffin, only
  Drift-wood its beams,
I roaming round thee, redoubling round thee;
And sea-pinks for candles, four solans have found thee.

Morag, I am swiftly, swiftly pacing,
  Unresting I;
Ranging and turning, menacing and chasing,
  Morag anigh;
Growling, so much see I, so much see not;
And mine is the weird and thou dost it dree not.
    Morag, ohee!

The Fishes :—

Here the soft wave lifted thee and laid thee;
  We followed thee,
Willing to know what called thee or what stayed thee
  In White Kirk of Sea;
Seals all the time were guarding and gliding,
That we could not see through the windows, they griding.

Leap we from the wave, lo, out around thee,
  The curling fishes,
The gleaming fishes, thy wake-dancers. Bound we
  Now once; now it swishes,
The dance of the spread tail and body slipping,
The mournful mouth and the wild death-skipping.
    Ohrohvanee!

CHRIST:—

Sleeping Morag, Morag the heart-weary,
  Now rest thee;
Unto thee I come that aught of eerie
  Far, far, flee;
I around thee moving, there is waving
By thee, garment white, pure hem of saving.

Morag, the kind-handed, foolish-hearted,
  Morag, so dead;
Why didst drown thee? when the billow started
  Then hadst thou fled
Running safe to me o'er yeast and foam-froth,
Hadst thou willed it, so then hadst thou come forth.
    Ohiu, ohiu!

SATAN:—

Satan comes to tread his lonely measure,
  Satan so slim;
Horny hoof shall leave its lightsome pressure,
  Speaking of him;
Harmless Satan, lamb on hill-side gamb'lling,
Sylvan Satan, by the loch shore-rambling.

Morag, thou art dead; and what to Satan,
  Morag, thy death?
Where art going, which porch dost thou wait in,
  Gasping for breath?
And meantime Satan doth dance before thee,
And meantime Satan doth scamper o'er thee.
    Never thou grue!

THE WILD CAT:—

Let me rest my paws upon thy bosom,
  Gazing on thee;
Morag, upon thine my body lissom
  Stretchèd shall be;
Mouse and bird and all the world forgetting,
Did I come, my legs in cold burns wetting.
    Ho ro! for thee!

THE MINSTREL:—

Beauty of sad tunes on eyelids wearied,
  Morag the fair,
Comfort of sad tunes be on thy spirit,
  Caring thy care;
Music-ripples on thy boat are lapping,
Thy dark coffin-boat whose sails are flapping.

Safe to gloaming sunset be thy journey,
  Breaking no dream;
We are watching from the hill-side ferny,
  Where thou dost stream;
Be of us thy thinking, us thy slumber,
While the waves croon round thee without number
    Morag, hee ree!

THE MALLARD:—

Mallard needs no more to guide and guard thee,
  Morag, farewell;
Now no charm nor talisman debarred thee,
  While greater swell
The winds and waves and night-clouds, calm, uncraven,
Enter thou there, within the long white haven,
    Morag the free!

THE KELPIE TO THE DROWNED BABY

Floating and wimpling 'mid soft jelly-fishes,
  Babe, saw I thee;
Shell-white as strange shell of heaven-seas, where swishes
  The long weed free,
I saw thee in the sunny, busy water,
  Dead, man's babe-daughter.

I knew not thee within that ship I fated
  To doom and death.
When yesternight I smoored the babble hated
  Of men, thy breath
I knew not too was covered by that blanket
  Of heavy billow, that, theirs wrapping, sank it.

I held thee on my knee, and in my elbow
  Thy small egg-head—
Fragile as baby-crab's its tender shell to
  Handle—is laid;
Daughter, how feat had'st been, the green deeps swimming
  Herrings thy play-mates, cods thy grave tire-women.

Thee have I drowned; is left thy lump, thy body;
  I did not know;
Here to wave-faring, far from dark and cloddy
  Tomb, I bestow
Thy carcase white, awhile to roll somewhither;
  God care thee thither!

Among my Books*

By Frederic Harrison

PART II

ANCIENT PROSE

LET me re-assure the gentle reader that I have no intention of discussing Greek and Latin texts, or of troubling him with any niceties of classical scholarship. In these desultory notes about the books I take down from my own shelves from time to time, I have much more to say about English versions than of original texts, and I shall talk more often about books which purists neglect, and are seldom heard of in Academic "Schools."

I can enjoy a dialogue of Plato in my Jowett, my Llewellyn Davies, or my F. J. Church, without reference to Bekker or Stallbaum. And I read Aristotle on the *Constitution of Athens* without troubling the British Museum for Papyrus CXXXI. Why are we to be tied down through life to the "books" and "periods," which are prescribed for Degree examinations? Professor Freeman was never tired of denouncing the pedantry of scholars who turned away from the "bad Greek" of Polybius—"the one Greek historian before whose eyes the history of the world was laid open as it never was to any other man before or after." And Professor J. W. Mackail in his masterly manual of *Latin Literature*, has much to tell us about Petronius and his *Supper of Trimalchio*, about Fronto and his fable of the *Origin of Sleep*, about Apuleius and his *Cupid and Psyche* and his pantomime entitled *The Golden Ass.*

Now, in my day, at Oxford, where we were pounded through the *Posterior Analytics*, and that cryptic Persius, and were drilled to imitate Sophocles' iambics and Cicero's *Familiar Letters*, nobody ever read—even heard of—Apuleius, Fronto, or Petronius—much less had we seen the Greek of Polybius or Lucian, of Epictetus, or Theophrastus,

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or knew a line of the *Pervigilium Veneris*, or *Daphnis and Chloe*. I daresay all this is now remedied, and "scholarship" is not limited to half-a-dozen Greek writers of one age and as many Latin writers of another age. I do not encourage any general reader to try the original texts of any of these. But there are now very good English versions of all of them—and there is excellent reading in all.

One who knows Professor Dill's two works on *Roman Society in the Empire*, or Warde Fowler's *Roman Religion*, or Professor Vernon Arnold's *Roman Stoicism*, or Alfred Zimmern's *Greek Commonwealth*, will understand how stunted a view of Latin thought it is to narrow down our reading to the Augustan Age, or our knowledge of Greece to the Periclean Age. These later writers, whom "scholars" despise for their decadent style, are full of novel ideas and new forms of art, which ultimately blossomed into mediæval literature. To exclude all this is to ruin the sense of continuity in civilisation, as Freeman so often and so justly insisted. And I do not hesitate to say that one who read with intelligence mere translations of the Greek writers between Theophrastus and Longus in the fifth century A.D., and who read the Roman writers between Tacitus and Claudian, would really understand the spirit of Greece and the spirit of Rome better than some learned first-class men who can study Thucydides in a railway train, and construe at sight Catullus, Tacitus, and Persius.

There used to be a tradition at Oxford that, in the early days of "school exams.," men like Professor Brewer, Orlando Hyman, and, I think, Robert Lowe, offered as their "Books" the Greek and Latin Classics. But when I knew the "Schools," we were tied down to the regulation authors, and we had to know them pretty close. I believe Macaulay said that a real scholar was one who would read his Greek Plato by the fire, with his feet on the fender. I am not up to this myself, and perhaps few readers of the *English Review* are. But there is no reason why we should not enjoy an hour or two with Plato in one of the admirable versions ready to hand. Plato's Greek is to my mind, as I wrote long ago, the most perfect form of prose style in all literature—"easy, lucid, graceful, witty, pathetic, imaginative by turns." Now very much of this exquisite language is retained in Jowett's translation. And I know no more delightful book for a quiet hour.

Well! if Jowett's *Plato*, in five stout octavos, be too heavy

to hold in an armchair, there are two lovely little 12mos. in the Golden Treasury Series, the *Republic*, by Ll. Davies and Vaughan, and *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, being four Dialogues in one volume, by F. J. Church. This delicious little book, which I have often had in hand since its first issue in 1880, has in it the very aroma of Plato, all his Attic grace and mind. If a man desires to enter into the spirit of the most exquisite prose style ever devised by the genius of man let him read the story of the death of Socrates in the *Phaedo*. Read it in Greek if you can—I read the original at school; but in the 64 years since then, I dare say I should want my Liddell and Scott at hand. Now I read it in Church with ever new delight, though I care for Plato's metaphysics as little as I care for the rhapsodical gammon of Professor Bergson or Miss Marie Corelli—who used to be so sorry for poor Satan. "Short-sighted Satan," as Coleridge says, not to know his true friends.

Men who really care to read ancient history in the ancient authors have excellent English versions of Herodotus by Professor Rawlinson, of Thucydides by Jowett, and of Polybius and Tacitus by Oxford and Cambridge scholars. I have them on my shelves, but I cannot pretend that I use them for more than an occasional reference. No one can be said to be well read unless he knows, at any rate, something of Herodotus' own account of the Persian War and of the great speeches of Pericles. A man must indeed have forgotten his Greek if he cannot still turn to these with the help of Jowett, Thomas Arnold, Grote, Curtius, and Holm. No one reads Polybius for his style, and he may really be as well read in English. Those cool, weighty judgments of his go quite naturally into our tongue. Shuckburgh came long after my time, and my only translation was that of "Mr. Hampton," of the eighteenth century. It was quite good enough for my purpose. The two men who have most highly praised Polybius are the historian, Edward Freeman, and the philosopher, Auguste Comte. I have already quoted the really extravagant encomium of Freeman. But it was Comte who spoke of "the great Polybius," "the last organ of Greek Sociology," and he placed him in the Calendar next to Alexander.

I must make a special plea for Tacitus, to be read at least partly in the original Latin. Comte, again, calls Tacitus "incomparable," and he places him in the Calendar next to Socrates, no doubt on account of "his profound

insight into human nature." The magical phrases of Tacitus crop up to this day in speeches and political articles. Everyone knows his "*solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant;*" his "*sera juvenum Venus, ideoque inexhausta pubertas;*" "*corrumpere et corrumpi saeculum vocatur;*" "*omnium consensu capax imperii, nisi imperasset;*" and his famous "*felix opportunitate mortis;*" "*odisse quem laeseris.*"

How tremendous is that Preface to Tacitus' *Histories*. Its close, sardonic sentences sound in our ears like the judgments of Rhadamanthus in Hell. "A time of catastrophies, of bloody wars, rent with seditions, cruel even in peace. Four emperors slain, three civil wars, volcanoes and earthquakes ruin our lovely coast; Rome and its monuments destroyed by fire at the hands of its citizens, public ceremonies polluted, sensational adulteries, exile, slaughter on sea and land everywhere rife. Birth, wealth, public service filled or declined, were counted crimes, to have a reputation for virtue was a sentence of death"—*Nobilitas, opus, omissi gestique honores pro crimine; et ob virtutes, certissimum exitium.* These inimitable apophthegms cannot be translated, and must be kept in their gem-like chiselling.

Tacitus is no easy author, but with a good translation, such as Church and Brodribb's, no one need be stopped from reading the *Germania* and the *Agricola* in the original. Our Harrow and Christ Church godfather, Robert Lawrence, left me a delightful book with these two essays (Cambridge, 8vo., 1809). I take up this fine and dear volume in its original calf binding, scored, I regret to say, with my boyish pencil notes, and I can read again and again the magnificent eulogium of Agricola by his son-in-law. And when we reach the death of the hero, without his daughter or her husband by his bedside, we feel that the Roman stoicism of the historian gives way in a truly modern outburst of pathos. When Tacitus in his stately confidence declares that the glory of Agricola will survive for after ages, in reality he is prophesying his own immortality.

Tacitus, of course, brings up Pliny, the Younger, who was "proof-reader" to Tacitus, and the pair used to be called "the duumvirs of letters." How delightfully fresh, how modern, how redolent of our own culture, are those Letters of Pliny to his friends. Without any thought of "exams.," I used to read them with that eccentric scholar, Orlando Haydon Hyman, of Wadham, who would buy

books, and tear out the pages as he turned them over, and when the whole was read *and remembered*, he would litter the floor with the covers. To Hyman, a classic was what the letters of a friend are to us. But he made me love Pliny's *Epistles*. How modern, how human, how English is this:—

Quid agit Comum, tuae meaeque deliciae? quid suburbanum amœnissimum? quid illa porticus, verna semper? quid πλατάνων opacissimus? quid Euripus viridis et gemmeus, quid subjectus et serviens lacus?

And people who soak themselves in despatches of Pitt, Peel, and Hartington, never read Pliny's Letters!

I cherish a delightful octavo with Latin notes, dated 1805, and still in its perfect calf binding, with its gold lettering and tooling fresh and bright. Why cannot modern binders make calf backs to last 100 years? Most of the bindings that I had at Wadham are all out of shape. They tell me now: "Oh! calf will not last more than 20 years!" How delightful is that *descriptio villae Laurentinae* (Ep. XVII.) "Do you wonder why I love my Laurens?" he writes to Gallus. "You would cease to wonder if you knew all the charm of the house, the convenience of its site, the spacious coast it commands." The Greek terms of architecture and convenience remind us how intensely imperial civilisation was a combination of Roman power with Greek intelligence. The *Epistles* contain more than one hundred Greek words beside whole pages of extracts from Greek authors. It was my old enjoyment of Pliny's *Laurentinum* which led me to write my book on the *gratiam villae* of our Sutton Place.

I had as a gift from the library of our dear old Mark Pattison, a copy of an early *Frontonis Reliquiae*; and though I certainly never studied Fronto, who was a Roman Euphuist of the decadence, I did turn up the famous *Letters* that passed between Marcus Aurelius, Emperor, "my Lord," and "my Master Fronto," about the fêtes at Alsium, to see the fable on the Origin of Sleep, so charmingly introduced by Pater in *Marius the Epicurean*. The *Creation of Sleep* is a very pretty fable. It reminds me of the delicious outburst of Sancho Panza: "Oh! blessed is the man who invented sleep!" There is a great deal about sleep in the famous correspondence between the Emperor and the old rhetorician whom Marcus at last found out to be a windbag. But the letters between the saintly Master

of the World—fancy Agrippa addressing Augustus as "My Lord!"—and his prig of "a Master," Fronto, are among the most fascinating pages of antiquity.

I do not recommend any one to read Fronto, the Doctor Johnson of the second century, (A.D.), who attacked the Christians and tried to return to the language of Ennius. But I do advise everyone to get that fine *Life of Marcus Aurelius*, by Paul Barron Watson, of Cambridge, U.S.A., and to read what he tells us in his second chapter about the intercourse of Fronto and Marcus Aurelius. Their letters were fished up, or scraped up, a century ago by Angelo Mai out of a pile of Church chronicles which had been written over them on the parchment. They are still in a broken state, many in Greek. Nobody reads them now. But P. B. Watson has translated enough of them to show us how lovable, how affectionate, how noble was the nature of M. Aurelius, how playful and intimate was the relation between this imperial hero and his devoted but rather finikin tutor. Here, again, in a book which the "Schools' Examiners" would not touch with the tip of their blue pencils, we have a picture of a world far different from that of Cæsar or Tacitus: curiously modern, and already bearing the germs of the mediæval world.

My Christ Church friend left me, among other books a handsomely bound octavo of 1804 of the Clarendon Press, Simpson's edition of Epictetus, Cebes, Prodicus and Theophrastus in one volume; text, Latin translations and notes. I suppose that at Oxford they read these books one hundred years ago, before the rage for Examinations set in; but in my day, fifty years later, we never heard of these authors. I do not recommend any one to read the Discourses of of Epictetus in the somewhat stiff Greek of the original. But there is no need to do so, for there are excellent editions of the translation by George Long in Bohn's Classical Library, and another in Everyman's Library (No. 402). I do not know any translation of the *Pinax*, or Picture, or Cartoon of Cebes.

Cebes was a follower of Socrates and one of the enquirers at his last day in the *Phaedo*. His Platonic Dialogue on Virtue and Vice, in an almost mediæval kind of allegory, is perhaps seldom read now, and I cannot say I have done more than dip into it, to see what Oxford men took up in old days. The *Choice of Hercules* is the famous allegory by Prodicus, of whom we hear in Xenophon's

Memoirs, which had such a singular success all through Greek and Roman times, and in the Middle Ages, and down to the age of Reynolds, furnished such endless "motives" to Moral Discourses, Painting, Tapestry, Poetry and all forms of Art. The *Characters* of Theophrastus are now well-known, and have been admirably translated, edited and annotated by the indefatigable industry of the late Sir Richard Jebb.

Though I do not suggest the reading of Epictetus in the Greek, he can be read very well now in good English—perhaps for choice in A. L. Humphreys' quarto "luxurious" reprint of George Long's translation. There has been a great revival of interest in Epictetus of late, owing largely to such books as Sir Samuel Dill's *Roman Society*, Dr. Bigg's *Church under the Roman Empire*, Warde Fowler's *Roman Religions*, Professor Vernon Arnold's *Roman Stoicism*. How fine, how wise, how truly religious are many of the sayings of the Stoical slave:—

"Death is a change, not from the state which now is to that which is not, but to that which is not now. Shall I, then, no longer exist? *You* will not exist, but you will be something else, of which the world now has need."

Surely this is Comte's *subjective immortality*. Here is the *Te Deum* of this apostolic Stoic:—

"Great is God, who has given us implements with which to cultivate the earth. I give thee all thanks that thou hast allowed me to join in this thy assemblage of men, and to see thy works, and to comprehend thy administration. Let us sing hymns to the deity, and bless him, and tell of his benefits."

He adopts the Hymn of Pythagoras; one quite as good as Bishop Ken's:—

"Let sleep not come upon thy languid eyes
Before each daily action thou hast scanned;
What's done amiss, what done, what left undone;
From first to last examine all, and then
Blame what is wrong, in what is right rejoice."
—*G. Long.*

Epictetus was a stern moralist, and in some ways would satisfy a Cromwellian Ironside or a primitive Quaker—but his maxims upon marriage, chastity, and the dangers of youthful philosophers were full of moderation and good sense, such as would scandalise the Christian fanaticism of Origen and Tertullian. But perhaps in these sensitive days the remarks of Epictetus should be "veiled," as Gibbon says, "in the obscurity of a learned language."[1] Let not

[1] Περὶ ἀφροδίσια, εἰς δυνάμιν [*i.e.* as far as you can] πρὸ γάμου καθαρευτέον· ἅπτο. μένῳ δὲ, ὡς νόμιμόν ἐστι, μεταληπτέον· μὴ μέντοι ἐπαχθὴς γίνου τοῖς χρωμένοις, μηδὲ ἐλεγκτικός.

the young acolyte of Stoicism entangle himself with women. Whatever you do in this matter keep within what's lawful and proper. But don't go about scolding those who do not share your moral views, making yourself a nuisance, and perpetually bragging about your own superior virtue.

When one reads Epictetus, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and looks into the lives and teachings of Zeno, Cleanthes, and the later Stoics, one is constantly reminded how close are the analogies of the nobler Stoics with the best and earliest followers of Christ—how in not a few things—in good sense, in humanity, in practical reality, they were superior to the contemporary teachers of the Gospel. There was always in them a something wanting; nor was Epictetus such a power as Paul, nor was Aurelius as great as Augustine. Superior to the Christians as the greater Stoics were in their more rational and balanced view of human nature, they failed to recognise what a tremendous social revolution, what a purging as by fire, was needed to cast out the devils of self-indulgence, cruelty, and lust, in which the ancient world was sunk.

For my own part, too, I always feel how close to a religion of humanity the wiser and purer spirits of the ancient world were gradually becoming conscious. Plutarch, Seneca, Trajan, Tacitus, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, with their solid, cultivated, human morality and humane ideals, were more akin to Hume, Adam Smith, Kant, Condorcet and Comte than were the Christian Fathers of Rome or Byzantium. Had such men been powerful enough to recast the antique world, with slavery, debauchery, and savagery rampant around them, civilisation might have been spared some centuries of Monkish tyranny. It was not to be. A cataclysmal upheaval of society from its bedrock had to work itself out under cruel and terrific phantasms, from the insanities and inhumanities of which we are slowly and painfully shaking ourselves free.

Is there not an uncanny warning to us all to-day as we read Tacitus, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, and see what pure and sublime thoughts the better spirits could nourish, as we study the record of the high civilisation of those ages of the Antonines, the art, the learning, the vast resources of the Empire stretching from the Grampians to the Euphrates, and as yet troubled only by Picts, and Goths, and Parthians, and Numidian barbarians on its distant frontiers—and then in a century or two over the greater

part of that vast dominion everything was swept away—its laws, its art, its learning, its culture, its religion! Will Europe ever know again its Dark Ages?

I never read Theophrastus at school or college, or until I got hold of Jebb's translation. And now, in the new edition by Dr. Sandys (1909), it is a most entertaining book. I do not care much for Theophrastus himself. There is a crudeness, and even a coarseness, about most of his Characters which is far from the subtlety of Molière, La Bruyère, La Rochefoucauld, Addison, or Swift. The slight sketch of the *areskos*, the *faux bonhomme*, is piquant, and so is the *microphilotimos*, the swagger "smart" man, the dandy "æsthete" (the compound word for the man who goes in for social distinction is not translateable). That is a delightful touch when the smart man puts up a tombstone to his little Maltese puppy—and inscribes an epitaph on him—"pure-bred Maltese." Only nowadays it would be "a pedigree Pekinese."

¶ But the real interest is in Professor Jebb's notes and illustrations. They give a wonderful picture of Athenian manners in the time of Alexander. How like, and yet how different, was life then and life to-day—how like, and yet how unlike, was Athens to Paris in the Seventeenth Century or London in the Eighteenth. The swagger smart ways are those of a Park Lane or Fifth Avenue millionaire—and yet the general tone of the *characters* is that of homely farmers or small tradesmen in the provinces in the time of the *Vicar of Wakefield* or *Tom Jones*. Read Jebb's *Theophrastus* carefully through with all his explanations and illustrations, and you will get a vivid idea of—

> **Athens, the eye of Greece, Mother of arts**
> **And eloquence, native to famous wits—**

a city which for centuries led the way to man in all things of beauty, truth, and grace, and yet had a democratic simplicity, an ideal equality, and a material penury, which has never been seen since then on earth, unless in some Franciscan or Trappist monastery.

This is another moralist of the quiet age of Athens, which Sir Richard Jebb has opened to us, in his fine translation and scholarly edition of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, also revised by Dr. Sandys (1909). It is a real encyclopædia of antique ethical analytics in 200 pages, as Bishop Copleston told us, "a text-book of human feeling; a storehouse of taste: an exemplar of condensed and accurate, but uniformly clear

and candid, reasoning." Of course, Aristotle is not Plato. He is not a master of fascinating language; nor has he the stern Puritanism of Epictetus, nor the spiritual melancholy of Aurelius. How shrewd, how sensible, how universal-minded in his survey of human speech, is "the master of those who know." Utterly different in form as it is, systematic, reserved, and self-restrained, the *Rhetoric* reminds me of Bacon's *Essays*. Do our psychologic romancers, our soul-poets, and esoteric critics study Aristotle's *Rhetoric?*

Now, no one who knows me will suppose that I care for nothing but philosophers and essayists, and do not enjoy the wit of Lucian and the romances of Apuleius and Longus. Every thoughtful person now recognizes the startling analogies between the world of the later Roman Empire and our own times. The similarities have been admirably described by Leslie Stephen in the famous essay in his *Apology*, which I keep next to Mr. Balfour's *Belief*. As Leslie says, we have just what they had in the time of the Antonines—"theosophical moonshine," "rationalistic interpretation of orthodoxy," "the galvanising dead creeds," sundry "philosophic moralities," and many "strange superstitions." Hence the number of new books about ancient thought in the three or four centuries when the Gospel was fighting its way against apolaustic Culture and rotting Paganism. Of these historical studies the recent works of Prof. Dill and of Warde Fowler are good types.

And now we have the whole of Lucian, admirably translated by H. W. and F. G. Fowler, 4 vols., 12mo., Oxford, 1905. This delightful book is as curiously modern in essential thought as it is historically redolent of the Roman world. The translators have caught the very spirit of Lucian's banter, and the English is as racy as Thackeray's *Book of Snobs*. Anyone who enjoys real fun should try one of the *Dialogues of the Dead*, or one of the *Dialogues of the H——* (one has to be careful, nowadays), or *Charon*, or the *Death of Peregrinus*. A friend of mine, liable to insomnia, keeps by the bedside a copy of Fowler's *Lucian*, and takes it up to while away a wakeful hour. Anyone can turn to any part of the four volumes to amuse a spare half-hour. He would find it quite as lively as one of the wonderful sixpenny novels which form the staple literature of our motor age.

Then there is that singular and enigmatic person

Petronius, whom Tacitus celebrates for his *erudite luxuriousness*, "the arbiter of elegance," the Oscar Wilde of Neronian æstheticism, the professor of the "too-too," whose wild satires remind us, says Dill, of Smollett and Le Sage. Petronius' most famous bit, the *Supper of Trimalchio*, has been well translated and edited by Michael J. Ryan, 1905. Trimalchio is the "bounder," or "rastaquouère," the self-made vulgarian, who by his money thrusts himself into society, curiously like a gold-bug of Park Lane or Chicago. All this makes the *Supper* worth reading for all its debased Latin and slum talk. Petronius, a sort of Beau Brummel to Nero's Prince Regent, paints a vivid but disgusting picture of the "smart" world of Rome—of Paris—of New York—of London. Vulgarians are immortal.

Everyone has heard of the beautiful myth of *Cupid and Psyche;* but I doubt if they have all read it in the book in which it first appears in literary form, and I doubt still more if many of them have read through the works of Apuleius, *Golden Ass*, *Florida*, *Apology*, and all. No one need read the Latin original, except those parts of the book which the translator declines to print in English; but it is all to be read in "Bohn's Classical Library," and, in spite of its characteristic brutalities, the *Metamorphoses* is highly entertaining. Apuleius, an African, half-Numidian he says himself, comes from Madaura, near the country where Italians and Arabs are slaughtering one another now. He is a rather mysterious person himself, and his various writings are a startling testimony to the clash that filled the Roman world in the second century A.D., between bestial and frivolous licence, spiritual mysticism, ideal aspirations for a new Heaven and a new earth, fierce asceticism, and preaching of the Sermon on the Mount. Apuleius touches on all. In the words of Dill—"the painter of the foulest scenes in ancient literature, seems to have cherished the faith in a heavenly King, First Cause of all nature, Father of all living things, Saviour of Spirits, beyond the range of time and change, remote, ineffable."

One may read *Cupid and Psyche* in Pater's version, and it looks as strange there as if we had a long episode of Spenser's *Faery Queen* stuck into the middle of Gulliver's account of the Yahoos and the Houyhnhms. But the whole of the *Golden Ass* is curious and amusing. It reminds

one of some Italian romance of the Renascence, now and then of the mediæval myths of Tannhaüser or the Niblungs. The entire book of *Metamorphoses* is a vivid proof that what we call the Middle Ages were beginning under the early Empire—indeed that the Renascence was interrupted and choked off prematurely by the Christian propaganda which for centuries had a hard struggle with Isis and Mithras. Apuleius would have made a typical Humanist under Leo X.—with all the literary agility, fancy, eloquence, shamelessness and vital energy of an Aretino or Cellini. But to grasp the entire contradictions of such a curiously versatile epoch, one ought to read the works of Apuleius entire—and not just pick out *Cupid and Psyche*, nor even the *Golden Ass* alone.

It is quite an exploded error that Romance is a modern invention, unknown to the ancients. Perhaps small parts of the "six shilling novels" of Greece and Rome have survived. But a few have passed the monastic censorship; and one wonders how the *magister scriptorii* of mediæval monasteries was induced to sign his *imprimatur*, or rather his *scribatur*, to the *Daphnis and Chloe* of Longus. This sweet and very pagan story was written in Greek in the Eastern Empire long after the formal adoption of Christianity, about the time when Jerome composed the *Vulgate* and Augustine wrote the *City of God*. There is not in the prose idyll a trace of anything Christian, of anything, indeed, but pure Hellenic naturalism. It is one of the marvels of literary history that Greek imaginative work was continuous from Homer to Longus, with little break in the continuity of language and even of tone, over no less than thirteen or fourteen centuries. Comte thought so much of it that he put the *Daphnis and Chloe*, with Theocritus, in the Library; and, in the Calendar, Longus stands with Theocritus in the month dedicated to Homer and ancient Poetry.

The *Daphnis and Chloe* of Longus, the *Ethiopica* of Heliodorus, a Christian bishop, and the romance of Achilles Tatius, are together in Bohn's Classical Library in English. The translation of *Daphnis and Chloe* which I know best, is that by Amyot, Paris, 1559, revised and completed by Paul Louis Courier, the mordant pamphleteer, in 1810. In French this charming idyll, the last dying swan song of ancient Greece, makes a pleasant relief as one shakes the mind free from the eternal torrent of up-to-date slang. Though it is certainly erotic, in the fine Greek sense, the

naive innocence of the two children and the graceful nature of the whole atmosphere are no more evil than a Greek statue in the nude.

The copy which I sometimes take up is the Amyot version, fantastically printed and got up by "Louys Glady," of Pimlico, London, 12mo., 1878, *édition de luxe*, etc., on Turkey paper in parchment. This book is quaintly printed in red and in blue ink alternately, at the Chiswick Press, and my copy is signed by Louys Glady—his motto being *Gladio non Gladi*—and it has a preface by Alexandre Dumas, fils, written in the old French of Amyot: *Entre les escripts traictant des plaisirs d'amour, oncques n'en veis plus gentil et plus plaisant, à painctures et couleurs plus fresches que ceste pastorale dy Daphnis et Chloé.* This wonderful introduction is printed alternately in red and blue ink with not more than three words in a line and occupies 24 pages. It is a quaint caprice, but is pleasant to read, the speeches in commas being all in red ink. So curious a romance as the *Daphnis and Chloe* may bear a form so fanciful, and I suppose unique, in its red, white and blue type, and Dumas fils, writing in the 16th century French, for a London publication of 1878!

I would not let it be supposed that I read all my classics in translations, and have sworn off pure Latin of the great time—especially that I do not care for standard Ciceronian prose. I keep my old school and college Ciceros at hand —*Verrines*, *Philippics*, *Offices*, *Letters*, and so forth, and occasionally turn up a quotation in the old texts. Like others who have had a fair education, I have on my spare shelves the collective works of Greek and Latin classics in single folio or quarto volumes for reference.*

In his *Latin Literature* (1895)—the most masterly survey of the written language of any nation whatever—Mr. J. W. Mackail has paid a splendid tribute to Cicero as the creator of Latin style:—

> "He created a language which remained for sixteen centuries that of the civilised world, and used that language to create a style which nineteen centuries have not replaced, and in some respects have scarcely altered."

I can hardly go as far that myself, unless this praise be

* *e.g.*, *Ciceronis Opera Omnia*, uno volumine comprehensa. C.T.A. Nobbe. Folio, Nutt. London, 1850; or

Platonis Opera Omnia. G. Stallbaum. Folio, Nutt. London, 1850.

Of course, one does not read these, but turns up a passage, as in *Poetae Scenici Graeci*. Dindorf. 1846; or, *Corpus Poetarum Latinorum*. London. 1841.

limited to Cicero's later ethical and familiar essays, and is not extended to his earlier political and forensic orations.

Now that I have at last come to years of discretion, there is nothing I find more soothing than Cicero's garrulous common-places on *Old Age* and on *Friendship*. Every man who has attained, or hopes to attain, to Old Age, or who has, or who hopes to have, a friend, should read *Cato Major* and *Lælius*. If he has forgotten his Latin, there is a pleasant little duodecimo in the "Golden Treasury Series," the two essays together, translated by E. S. Shuckburgh in 200 pages. A pleasanter book for a quiet elderly man cannot be found. But no one who has been through the fifth form need be stopped from Cicero's really "Lower School" Latin, especially if he gets help from Dr. Shuckburgh's two editions of the *Cato Major* and the *Lælius*, with notes, vocabulary, and illustrations. These are in the "Classical Series," uniform with the translation in the "Golden Treasury Series."

How soothing is it to us octogenarians to read in the orator's stately sentences that we need not regard ourselves as useless crocks. He makes Cato say that in his 84th year he is still listened to in the Senate, and still performs his duty as a citizen. The Republic does not want muscles in all its sons; it needs counsel, experience, moderation from some. Each age of man has its own tasks, its proper powers, and its special happiness. Ours, says old Cato, lies in memory and in a sense of repose derived from long converse with men and things. The illustrious Fabius, he says, had that *gravitas condita comitate*—his dignity was sweetened with courtesy (a good description of Mr. Gladstone!)—*nec senectus mores mutaverat*—age had brought no change in his manners or his character. He certainly retained his alertness, as when he retorted on Salinator, who nearly lost Tarentum—*nisi tu amisisses, nunquam recepissem.*

To sensible men who know how to use their lives, says Cato, old age is by no means hard to bear. But neither wealth nor honours can make it pleasant to the unwise. *Insipienti etiam in summa copia gravis.* How cheering are all the words he uses of *placida et lenis senectus* as the natural end of the *quiete et pure et eleganter actae aetatis.* And then he tells us about Plato who died at his writing desk in his 81st year, about Gorgias working on at 107, and saying to one who asked him how he felt—*nihil*

habeo quod accusem senectutem—how Sophocles refuted the charge of senile imbecility by reciting in court the *Œdipus at Colonus*, which he had just written when approaching the age of 90—*num illud carmen desipientis videretur!* Would that the Gods could have made a few more contemporaries of Sophocles so mad or so senile—at least sufficiently sane to have preserved the hundred and odd plays they allowed to perish.

Don't call us veterans useless, says Cato to his young friends! The helmsman on the ship sits very quietly at his post, and does not work his muscles like the men at the oar or those aloft on the mast. *Non facit ea quae juvenes: at vero multo majora et meliora facit. Non viribus aut velocitatibus aut celeritate corporum res magnae geruntur, sed consilio, auctoritate, sententia; quibus non modo non orbari, sed etiam augeri senectus solet.*

That will do for our lesson to-day, Boys, and we will stop there now—or you will be saying that if old men are not useless, they may be horrid bores.

The Mask

By F. Tennyson Jesse

When Vashti Bath was "led out" by the two most eligible young men in the village, the other women spoke their minds pretty freely on the subject; and when she progressed to that further stage known as "arm-a-crook," and still refrained from making the fateful choice, comment waxed bitter. The privilege of proposal belongs in Cornwall to that sex commonly called "the weaker"—a girl goes through the various stages of courtship conducted out of doors, and if she decides to marry the young man, asks him to "step in" one evening when he has seen her home, after which the engagement is announced. Vashti, in the most brazen way, was sampling two suitors at a time, and those two the most coveted men in Perran-an-zenna, and therein lay the sting for the womenfolk.

"What is there tu her, I should like to knaw?" the Wesleyan minister's wife demanded of her friends at a somewhat informal prayer meeting. "She'm a blowsy, ontidy kind o' maid who don't knaw one end of needle from t'other. When her stockin' heels go into holes she just pulls them further under her foot, till sometimes she du have to garter half way down her leg!"

"She'm blowsy, sure 'nough," agreed a widow woman of years and experience, "but she'm a rare piece o' red and white, and menfolk are feeble vessels. If a maid's a fine armful they never think on whether she won't be a fine handful. And Vashti du have a way wi' her."

That was the whole secret—Vashti had a way with her. She was a splendid slattern—showing the ancient Phœnician strain in her coarse, abundant black hair, level brows, and narrow, green-blue eyes, with a trace of Jew in the hawk-like line of nose and the prominent chin curved a little upwards from her throat. A few years, and she would be lean and haggard, but now she was a fine, buoyant creature, swift and tumultuous, with a mouth like a flower. For all the slovenliness of her clothes she had a trick of putting them on which an Englishwoman never has as a birthright, and rarely

achieves. Vashti could tie a ribbon so that every man she passed turned to look after her.

Perran-an-zenna is a mining village, and some of the menfolk work in the tin mines close at hand, and some in the big silver mine four miles away. James Glasson, the elder and harsher-featured of Vashti's lovers, worked in the latter, and there was every prospect of his becoming a foreman, as he had a passion for mechanics and for chemistry, and was supposed to be experimenting with a new process that would cheapen the cost of extracting the silver. Willie Strick, the younger, handsomer, more happy-go-lucky of the two men, went to "bal" in the tin mines, and was disinclined to save, but then his aged grandmother, with whom he lived, had been busy saving for twenty years. Strick was an eager lover, quick to jealousy—Glasson was uncommunicative even to Vashti, and careless of her opinons. Though the jealousy irked her it flattered her too, but on the other hand, Glasson's carelessness, even while it piqued her, made her covet him all the more.

This was how matters stood one evening in late March when Vashti had gone up to the moors to fetch in the cows—not her own, no Bath had been thrifty enough for that, but belonging to the farm where she worked. As she walked along in the glowing light, the white road winking up at her through a hole in her swinging skirt, and a heavy coil of hair jerking a little lower on the nape of her neck with each vigorous stride, Vashti faced the fact that matters could continue as they were no longer. At bottom Vashti was as hard as granite, she meant to have what she wanted; her only trouble was she had not quite settled what it was she did want. Like all her race, she had a strain of fatalism in her, that prompted her to choose whichever of the two men she should next chance to meet—and the woman in her suggested that at least such a declaration on the part of fate would give her the necessary impetus towards deciding upon the other.

Lifting her eyes from the regular, pendulum-like swing of her skirt that had almost mesmerised her lulled vision, she saw, dark against the sunset, the figure of a man. She knew it to be either James or Willie because of the peculiar square set of the shoulders and the small head—for the two men were, like most people in that intermarrying district, cousins, with a superficial trick of likeness, and an almost exact similarity of voice. A prescience of impending fate

weighed on Vashti; the gaunt shaft of the disused Wheal Zenna mine, that stood up between her and the approaching man, seemed like a menacing finger. The man reached it first and stood leaning up against it, one foot on the rubble of granite that was scattered around, his arm, with the miner's bag slung over it, resting across his raised knee. Vashti half thought of going back, even without the cows, but it was already time the poor beasts were milked, and curiosity lured her on. She went across the circle of greener grass surrounding the shaft, and found Glasson awaiting her.

To every woman comes a time in life when she is ripe for the decisive man; and it is often a barren hour when he fails to appear. For Vashti the hour and the man had come together, and she knew it as she met Glasson's look. Putting out his hands, ingrained with earth in the finest seams of them, he laid them heavily on her shoulders, like a yoke. His bag swung forward and hit her on the chest, but neither of them noticed it.

"Vashti, y'um got to make'n end," he said. "One way or t'other. Which es et to be?"

She shook under his gaze, her lids drooped, but she tried to pout out her full under-lip with a pretence of petulance. Suddenly his grip tightened.

"So 'ee won't tell me? Then by G—, I'll du the tellin'! Yu'm my woman, do 'ee hear? Mine, and neither Will Strick nor any other chap shall come between us two."

Wheeling her round, he held her against the rough side of the shaft and bent his face to hers; she felt his lips crush on her own till she could have cried out with pain if she had been able to draw breath. When he let her go her breast heaved, and she stood with lowered head, holding her hand across her mouth.

"Now we'll get the cows, my lass," said Glasson quietly, "and take'n home, and then yu shall ask me to step in."

. . . . . .

During the short, fierce courtship that followed Vashti saw very little of Willie Strick, though she heard he talked much of emigrating, vowing he would disappear in the night and not come home until he had made a fortune. All of Vashti's nature was in abeyance save for one emotion—a stunned, yet pleasurable, submission. It was not until several months after her marriage that she began to feel

again the more ordinary and yet more complex sensations of every-day life. If she had to the full a primitive woman's joy in being possessed, she had also the instinctive need for possessing her man utterly, and James Glasson was only partly hers. It was borne in on her that by far the larger side of him was his own, never to be given to any woman. Ambition and an uncanny secretiveness made up the real man; he had set himself to winning his wife chiefly because the want of her distracted him from his work and fretted him.

He bent the whole of life to his purposes, without any parade of power, but with a laborious care that gradually settled on Vashti like a blight. When she realised that no matter how rightly she wore her little bits of finery, he no longer noticed them, realised that she was merely a necessity to him as his woman—something to be there when she was wanted, she began to harden. He still had a fascination for her when he chose to exert it—his very carelessness and sureness of her were what made the fascination, but gradually it wore thinner and slacker, and a sullen resentment began to burn through her seeming submission.

The Glasson's cottage was tucked away in a hollow of the moor, only the chimney of it visible from Perran-an-zenna, and Vashti began to chafe under the isolation, and to regret she had never been at more pains to make friends among her own sex.

As summer drew to its full, Vashti watched the splendid pageant of it in the sky and moor with unappreciative eyes. If anyone had told her that her soul had been formed by the country of her birth and upbringing, she would have thought it sheer lunacy, but her parents were not more responsible for Vashti than the land itself. The hardness and bleakness of it, the inexpressible charm of it, the soft, indolent airs, scented with flowers, or pungent with salt, above all, that reticence that makes for lonely thoughts, these things had, generation by generation, moulded her forbears, and their influence was in her blood. Even the indifference with which she saw, arose from her oneness with her own country, and in this she was like all true Cornish folk before and since—they belong to Cornwall body and soul. The quality of reticence had become secretiveness in James Glasson—he took a childish pleasure in keeping any little happening from the world in general and Vashti

in particular, and the consequence was that, in her, strength was hardening into relentlessness.

One market day she was returning from Penzance—a drive of some eight miles, accomplished in the cart of their nearest neighbour—with a paper parcel on her knee, which she kept on fingering under the rug as though to make sure it was still there. At the neighbour's farm she got out, thanked him, and started to walk the remaining mile over the moor, with the precious parcel laid carefully on the top of the basket of household goods. It had been one of those days when the air seems to have a liquid quality that makes it almost visible—a delicate effulgence that envelops every object far and near, blurring harsh outlines and giving an effect as though trees and plants stood up into an element too subtle for water and too insistent for ether. The cloud shadows gave a plum-like bloom to the miles of interfolding hills, and inset among the grey-green of the moor the patches of young bracken showed vivid as slabs of emerald. Lightly as balls of thistledown the larks hopped swiftly over the heather on their thin legs, the self-heal and bird's-foot trefoil made a carpet of purple and yellow; from the heavy-scented gorse came the staccato notes of the crickets, while in a distant copse a cuckoo called faintly on her changed, June note. As Vashti rounded the corner of the rutted track and the cottage came into view, she paused. The deeply sloping slate roof was iridescent as a pigeon's breast, and the whitewashed walls were burnished with gold by the late sunlight, while against the faded peacock blue of the fence the evening primroses seemed luminous. Even to Vashti it all looked different, transmuted. Her fingers pressed the shiny paper of the parcel till it crackled and a smile tugged at her lips. After all, it was not bad to be young and handsome on an evening in June, to be returning to a home of her own, with under her arm a parcel that, to her, was an event. Vashti had bought that thing dear to the heart of the country-woman, a length of rich black dress silk; she meant to make it up herself, and though her stitches were clumsy, she knew she could cut and drape a gown better than many a conscientious sempstress. And then—then she would take her place as wife to the most discussed man in all that part of Penwith and hold up her head at Meeting. Even James himself could not but treat her differently when she had black silk on her back.

She went through to the outhouse, which James used as a workshop, and tried the door. It was locked. "James!" she cried, rattling the latch, "James!"

She heard him swear swiftly, then came the sound of something hastily put down and a cupboard door being shut. Then Glasson opened the door a few inches, and stood looking down at her.

"Get into kitchen," he said briefly, "can't 'ee see I'm busy?"

Already Vashti's pleasure in her purchase was beginning to fade, but she stood her ground, though wrathfully.

"Yu needn' think yu'm the only person with secrets," she flashed: "I'd a fine thing to show 'ee here, if yu'd a mind to see it—now I shall keep'n to myself."

"Woman's gear!" gibed Glasson, "you've been buying fulishness over to market. Get the supper or I shan't have time for a bite before I go to see t' foreman."

"That's all yu think on," she retorted; "yu and your own business."

"That's all yu should think on, either," he said, pulling her towards him with a hand on the back of her neck, and kissing her on her unresponsive mouth. She stood sullenly; then, when he dropped his hand, went into the house. She heard him turn the key in the lock as she went. That night she cried hot tears of anger on to the new dress length, and next day she went across the moor and met Willie Strick on his way home to Perran-an-zenna.

That was the first of many meetings, for Willie's resentment faded away before the old charm of Vashti's presence. In spite of his handsome face, he was oddly like James. The backs of their heads were similar enough to give Vashti a little shock whenever she passed behind her husband as he sat at table, or each time that Willie lay beside her on the moor, his head on her lap. She would pull the curly rings of his hair out over her fingers, and even while she admired the glint of it, some little memory of a time when James' hair had glinted in the sun or candlelight, pricked at her—not with any feeling for him except resentment, but at first it rather spoiled her lover for her. They had to meet by stealth, but that was easy enough, as James was now on an afternoon core, and Willie on a morning one. To do the latter justice, he had tried, at the beginning, a feeble resistance to the allure that Vashti had for him, not from any scruple of conscience, but because his pleasure-loving nature

shrank from anything that might lead to unpleasantness. And, careless as he seemed of his wife, James Glasson would be an ugly man to deal with if he discovered the truth. So far there had been nothing except the love-making of a limited though expressive vocabulary, and Vashti curbed him and herself for three whole weeks. She was set on possessing Willie's very soul—here, at least, was a man whom she could so work upon that he would always be hers even to the most reluctant outpost of his being. By the end of those weeks, her elusiveness, the hint of passion in her, and the steady force of her will, had enslaved Strick hopelessly: he was maddened, reckless, and timid all at once.

"Vashti, it's got to end," he said, desperately, as he walked with her one evening as near to the cottage as he dared, and as he spoke he slid an arm round her waist. To his surprise, she yielded and swayed towards him so that her shoulder touched his; in the sunset light her upturned face glimmered warm and bewilderingly full of colour.

"Wait a bit, lad," she breathed. "James goes up to London church town to-morrow to see one of the managers —happen he'll be gone a week or more. . . ."

He felt her soft mouth on his cheek for a moment and his arms went round her—the next moment came a crash that seemed to split the sky, and from the outhouse leapt a whistling column of flame.

Stricken with a superstitious terror, Willie screamed—loudly and thinly, like a woman. Vashti recoiled, flung up her hands, then rushed towards the burning outhouse.

"James is in there!" she cried. "Oh, get'en out, get'en out!"

The flame had been caused by an exploded lamp, but there was not much inflammatory stuff for it to feed on, and a thick smoke, reeking of chemicals, hung above the outhouse. As Vashti, followed by the shaking Strick, reached the door, it swung open and a Thing stood swaying a moment on the step.

It seemed to the lovers' first horrified glimpse that all of Glasson's face had been blown away. The whole of one side of it was covered by an enormous blister, a nightmare thing, which, as the woman gazed at it, burst and fell into blackness. The same moment Glasson dropped his length across the threshold.

"The doctor, go for doctor," whispered Vashti with dry lips, "as quick as you can—I—I dursn't turn 'en over."

So Glasson lay with what had been his face against a patch of grass, while Willie ran, horror-ridden, to Perran-an-zenna, for the doctor.

Dry-eyed, Vashti watched by her husband for three nights, and all praised her for wifely devotion. She sat by the gleam of a flickering night-light, her eyes on the bandaged face—the linen was only slit just as much as was necessary for breathing.

"Well, Mrs. Glasson," said the doctor cheerily, as he finished his inspection on the third night, "I can give you good news. Your husband will live, and will keep the sight of one eye. But—though of course wonders can be done with modern surgery—we can't build up what's gone. He'll always have to wear a mask, Mrs. Glasson."

When he had gone Vashti went and stood by the bed, looking down on the unconscious man, who lay breathing heavily—how easy it would be to lay a hand over that slit in the linen—a few minutes, and this nightmare would be over. She half put out her hand, then drew it back. She was not yet capable of cold-blooded crime.

Lighting a candle, she took from a drawer a paper parcel, which she unfolded on the little table. As the still untouched folds of the black dress length, with a few little hard-edged blots on it that meant tears, came into view, Vashti's self-control broke down. She wept stormily, her head along her arms. Release had flaunted so near to her, and was withdrawn, and her horror of the Thing on the bed was mingled with a pity for it that ate into her mind. She dried her burning eyes, and picking up the scissors, began to cut a mask out of the tear-stained breadths; her invincible habit of considering herself forbade her, even at that moment, to use the good yards for such a purpose.

The candle-flame was showing wan in the grey of the dawning when Vashti put the last stitches to the mask—she had made it very deep, so that it would hang to just below the jawbone, and she had laboriously buttonhole-stitched round the one eye-hole, and sewn tape-strings firmly to the sides, top and bottom. The mask was finished.

James Glasson's figure, a trifle stooped and groping, with that sinister black curtain from cap to collar, soon ceased to be an object of fearful curiosity in Perran-an-zenna; even the children became so used to it that they left off calling out as he passed. He grew more silent and morose than ever, and his secretiveness showed itself in all sorts of ingenious petty ways.

Vashti had the imaginative streak of her race, and life in the lonely cottage with this masked personality took on the quality of nightmare. She felt his one eye watching her continually, and was tormented by the thought, "How much does he know?" Who could tell? Had he seen anything from the outhouse window when she had rashly let Willie come so near, or did he know who it was who had fetched the doctor? Sometimes a meaning word seemed to show that he knew everything, sometimes she argued that he could only guess. The black mask filled the whole of her life, the thought of it was never out of her mind, not even when she was working on her old farm, for she had to be breadwinner now. She found herself dwelling on what lay behind the mask, wondering whether it could be as bad as that black expanse, and once she woke herself at night, screaming: "Tear 'en down, Willie! Tear the black mask down!" and then lay trembling, wondering whether her husband had heard. For days he said nothing and she felt herself safe; then one night he turned to her. "There's no air," he complained. "Can't 'ee take down t' curtains? If 'ee can't do anything else, why—tear 'en down, tear 'en down!"

He had mimicked her very voice, and silent with fear, she took down the curtain, her fingers shaking so that the rings jingled together along the rod. One day, when he was working in the garden he turned to face the wind. She saw him sideways against the sky, and the black mask, held taut at brow and chin by the strings, was being blown inward. She never forgot the horror of that concave line against the sky.

She came to regard the mask with superstitious awe; it seemed James Glasson's character materialised—the outward expression of the inner man. Nervous and cowed to abjectness as she was, she felt near the end of her endurance. The perpetual scheming to meet Willie unknown to her husband—a difficulty now the latter was nearly always about the house-place, and the wearing uncertainty of "How much does he know?" were fraying her nerves. Some two months after the accident the crash came.

James had gone to Truro to see a surgeon there, and had announced his intention of spending the night with cousins. The utter bliss of being alone, and having the cottage free from the masked presence for even one day acted like a balm on Vashti. She forbade Willie to come near her till the

evening, partly from motives of prudence, but chiefly because she craved for solitude. By the afternoon she was more her old, sufficient, well-poised self, and when evening drew on she busied herself about her little preparations in the kitchen with a colour burning in her cheeks and a softened light in her eyes. That evening Vashti Glasson was touched with a grace of womanliness she had never worn for her husband. Every harmless and tender instinct of the lover was at work in her, making her choose her nicest tablecloth, arrange a cluster of chrysanthemums in an ornate glass vase, put a long-discarded ribbon of gaudy pink in her hair. Then she took off her working frock of dirty, ill-mended serge, and shook out in triumph the folds of the black silk, now made up in all its glory, and hideous with cheap jet. It converted her from a goddess of the plough to a red-wristed, clumsy girl of the people; and when her hair was dressed in the fashionable lumps, with a fringe-net hardening the outlines, she looked like a shop-girl, but she herself admired the effect intensely.

When three taps at the window told that Strick was outside, the colour flew to her face, making her so beautiful that she triumphed even over her costume; she had become a high priestess of Love, and was not to be cheated of any of the ritual. She was decked out as for a bridal; no more rough-and-ready wooing and winning for her. But Strick's passion was somewhat daunted by all the preparations for his welcome; the kitchen looked unusual, and so did she, and he hung back for a moment on the threshold.

"What's come to 'ee?" he asked, foolishly agape.

"'Tes a weddin' gown made for yu," said Vashti simply.

"But 'tes black!" he stammered. "'Tes ill luck on a black bridal, Vassie."

"Ours is no white bridal, lad," she told him. "Come in and set down—yes, take that chair," and she pushed Glasson's accustomed seat forward for her lover.

Conversation languished during the meal—Willie Strick was bewildered by the oddness of everything, Vashti included—and his was no level head to plan any details or set a scene—Vashti won by stealth, anywhere and anyhow, was all he had thought of or wished for. Hers was the master-mind and he was helpless before it, and while she inflamed him she frightened him too.

A full moon swam up over the line of distant sea that

showed in a dip of the moorland, and the lamp began to smell and burn low. They had finished supper, and Willie was drinking rather freely of the whisky she had set before him. Vashti turned out the lamp, and as she did so a sudden harsh noise sent the heart to her throat, while Willie sprang up fearfully. It was only the poker, that, caught by the full skirt of the black silk frock, had been sent clattering to the ground, but it made them stare at each other in a stricken panic for a speechless minute. The white light of the moon shone clearly into the room, throwing a black pattern of window-shadow over the disordered supper table, where the chrysanthemums, overturned by Willie's movement, lay across an empty dish, and in the silence the two startled people could hear the rhythmic sound of the water as it drip-drip-dripped on to the floor.

Vashti was the first to recover herself. "Us be plum fulish, Willie!" she said, with an attempt at a laugh. "Do believe us both thought it was James, and him safe to Truro."

"If 'tes," said Strick madly, "he shan't take 'ee from me now. I'll have 'ee, I swear it."

Vashti did not answer,—with fascinated eyes she was watching the door slowly open—she could see the strip of moonlit brightness, barred by the darkness of an arm, grow wider and wider. She knew, before the form, so terribly like Willie's, now its masked face was against the light, appeared, that it was her husband.

Quite what happened next she could not have told. The little room seemed full and dark with fear—blind, unreasoning fear, that beat even about her head. The long-drawn-out crash of the overturned table added to her confusion—then quite suddenly the sounds of struggling ceased and one man rose to his feet. In the dimness of the room, seeing only the shape of him, she could not tell whether it were James or Willie, until he turned his face to the moonlight, and she saw, with a throb of relief, Strick's face.

"Get a light, Vassie," he whispered. "I fear he's dead."

She lit a candle and they knelt down by Glasson. In falling his head had hit the fender, and blood was trickling on to the floor. She ripped open his shirt and felt for his heart as well as her trembling fingers would allow. She lifted his arm and let it fall—it dropped a dead weight on to the tiled floor. It seemed to her excited fancy that already he was turning cold.

"Willie, you've killed 'en!" she whispered. They both spoke low, as though they thought the dead man could overhear.

"I didn't hit 'en," babbled Willie. "He stumbled and fell and hit his head—they'll make me swing for this—what shall us du, what shall us du?"

"Wait—I must think," commended the woman. She pressed her hands to her forehead, and sat very still.

"Have 'ee thought?" whispered Willie, anxiously.

"Yes—I've thought. Willie, yu'm rare and like—he—and that'll save us."

"What do 'ee mean?" asked Willie, thinking the shock had turned her brain.

"The mask!" replied Vashti, "the mask!"

Then, kneeling by the still body, they talked in whispers—she unfolding her plan—he recoiling from it, weakly protesting, and then giving way.

They were to take the dead man between them to the disused mine shaft and throw him down, then Willie was to wear the black mask, and take Glasson's place, until they could sail for America together. Like all simple plans, it had a touch of genius. Willie's constant talk of emigrating, his oft-heard boasts of slipping away in the night and not coming back till he had made a fortune, would all help to cover up his disappearance. And who was to connect it with Vashti and her silent, eccentric, black-masked husband—who would speak to him or her on the subject? And if they did—she could always invent a plausible answer, while he was safeguarded by the fact that the strongest point of likeness between the two men was their voices. The only dissimilar thing about them had been their faces.

"I won't wear his mask," said Willie, shuddering; "I couldn' put 'en against me. You must make me another."

"I'll make 'en now," said Vashti. She rose to her feet, and setting the candle on the seat of a chair, looked about her.

"You must put the room to rights," she commanded. "Make 'en look as though James and I had just had our bit o' supper. Mop up the water and sweep all the broken cloam together—and—and take him to the passage-way."

"Yu'm not going to lave me alone wi' he?" cried Willie, aghast.

"Edn room for me to work here. I'll be up overstairs making the mask Keep t' curtain over the window."

Upstairs, she seized scissors and hacked a square out of the front of her gown. Then she sat and sewed as she had sewed once before, when her husband had lain motionless on the bed. Every now and then came small sounds of things being moved from down below, then a heavy fall and the sound of something being dragged.

"How's et goin', Willie?" she called out.

"'Tes all right," he called back. "I've put 'en in passage."

The moon was near setting when the mask was finished, and she went to the top of the stairs with it in her hand.

"There 'tes," she whispered. "I'll drop it down. Put it in your pocket and I'll change my gown. 'Tes time we were stirrin'."

The mask fluttered down in the darkness, and she went back to her room and changed swiftly into the old serge.

It was a ghastly journey to the old mine shaft, the heavy form of the dead man sagging between them. They dared have no light, and went stumbling over tussocks and ruts; but as both would have known the way blindfold, they found the shaft without difficulty. They scrambled up the sloping rubble of stones and tipped the body over the jagged hole in the side of the shaft, and after what seemed an interminable silence there came a thud from several hundred feet below them, then another, as though the body had rebounded, then all was stillness.

Vashti leant up against the side of the shaft, as she had leant when James kissed her there, and shut her eyes; the sweat running down her brow had matted her lashes together into thick points, and the drops tickled her neck so that she put up her hand to it. Both she and the man were drawing the deep, hoarse breaths of exhaustion, and for a few minutes they rested in silence—then he spoke. "Yu must be comin' back along o' me now," he told her, "the dawn'll be showin' soon."

"Yes, yes," cried Vashti, starting up, "us may meet someone going to bal, sure 'nough."

"Tes all right—I've got t' mask on. Come."

He closed his fingers over her arm so harshly that she winced, and together they made their way back in the cold, bleak hush that preceded the autumnal dawn. Gradually, as they went, some glimmerings of what her life would be henceforth appeared to the woman. The fear of neighbours, the efforts to appear natural, the memory of that

slowly-opening door, and the still thing by the fender, the consciousness of what lay at the bottom of the disused shaft; and, above all, the terrible reminder of her husband in the masked Willie—it would be like living with a ghost. . . .

Once back at the cottage, he drew her within and barred the door behind them. She moved away to find a light, but he caught her.

"Won't 'ee give me so much as a kiss, and me with red hands because of yu?" he asked.

She felt the mask brush her cheek, and broke away with a cry. She heard him laugh as she lit a candle, and turned towards him.

"A black bridal!" he cried wildly; "did I tell 'ee 'twas a black bridal? 'Tes a red one, do 'ee hear?"

"Willie," she begged him, "take off t'mask now we'm alone."

"Aren't 'ee afeared?" he asked.

"'Tes safe enough till mornin', and I du hate that mask more'n the devil. Take 'en off."

"I'll take 'en off—to please yu, lass."

He seized the mask violently by the hem and ripped it away—and she saw it was her husband.

"Yu fule!" he said slowly, following her as she backed away from him, her mouth slack with fear, her eyes glazed, her whole being showing her as almost bereft of her senses. "Yu fule to think to fule me! Yu was quick enough to say I was dead; I'm not so easy killed, Vassie. No so easy killed as your lover was—just the carven'-knife between his shoulders when he was stoopin' down, that's all. He was fearful of lookin' at the dead man; he never knew the dead man was lookin' at he. Yu heard him fall, Vassie, and thought it was him movin' me ——"

"Put t'mask on," wailed Vashti, pressing her fingers against her eyes; "put t'mask on again, for the love o' God!"

"There's been enough o' masks," he retorted grimly. "You've got to bear to see me now; me, not your lover that you've helped to tip over Wheal Zenna shaft. Eh, yu fule, did 'ee think I didn' knaw? I've knawed all these months; I've seen 'ee meet 'en; I told 'ee I was going to stop the night over to Truro so as to catch 'ee together; I let 'ee think I was dead, and listened t' the plan yu thought to make. Only half a man am I, wi' no mouth left to kiss

with? I've an eye left to see with, and an ear to hear with, and a hand to strike with, and a tongue to teach 'ee with."

"I'll tell on 'ee," said Vashti, "I'll tell the police on 'ee. Murderer, that's what yu are."

"I doan't think 'ee will, my dear. 'Tedn a tale as'll do yu any good—a woman who cheats her husband, and tries to kill 'en, and helps to carry a body two miles over moor and tip 'en down shaft. And what have 'ee to complain on, I should like to knaw? When I wear t'mask yu can pretend I'm Willie—handsome Willie. Willie who can kiss a maid and make a fine upstandin' husband. Willie was goin' to be me, why shudn' yu think I was Willie? Do 'ee, my dear, if 'tes any comfort to 'ee."

He slipped on the mask as he spoke and knotted the strings. The door had swung open, and the candle flame shook in the draught as though trying, in fear, to strain away from the wick. The steel-cold light of dawn grew in the sky and filtered into the room, showing all the sordid litter of it; the frightened woman, with a pink ribbon awry in her disordered hair, and the ominous figure of the masked man. He came towards her round the table.

"'Tes our bridal night, lass!" he said. "Why do 'ee shrink away? Mind yu that 'tes Willie speakin'! Don't let us think on James Glasson dead to the bottom 'o the shaft. I'm Willie—brave Willie who loves 'ee. . . . ."

As his arms came out to catch her, she saw his purpose in his eye, and remembered his words, "A red bridal, lass, a red bridal!"

At the last moment she woke out of her stupor, turned, and ran, he after her. Across the little garden, down the moorland road, over heather and slippery boulders and clinging bracken, startling the larks from their nests, scattering the globes of dew. Once she tried to make for a side-track that led to Perran-an-zenna, but he headed her off, and once again she was running, heavily now, towards Wheal Zenna mine-shaft. He was gaining on her, and her breath was nearly spent. Both were going slowly, hardly above a stumbling walk, as the shaft came in sight; the drawing of their breath sounded harsh as the rasping of a file through the still air. As she neared the shaft she turned her head and saw him almost on her, and saw the gleam of something in his uplifted hand. She gathered together all her will, concentrated in those few moments all the strength of her nature, determined to cheat him at the last. Up the rubble

of stones she scrambled, one gave beneath her foot and sent her down, and abandoning the effort, she lay prone, awaiting the end.

But Vashti's luck held—it was the man who was to lose. A couple of miners who had been coming up the path from Perran-an-zenna had seen the chase and followed hot foot, unnoticed by the two straining, frantic creatures, who heard nothing but the roaring in their own ears. They caught Glasson as he ran across the patch of grass to the shaft, and he doubled up without a struggle in their arms. Physical and mental powers had failed together, and from that day James Glasson was a hopeless idiot—harmless and silent. Vashti had won indeed.

Admirable woman of affairs that she was, she took a good sleep before confronting the situation; then she made up her story and stuck to it. Willie's name was never mentioned, and his disappearance, so long threatened, passed as a minor event, swamped in the greater stir of Glasson's attempt to murder his wife. His madness had taken the one form that made Vashti safe—he had gone mad on secretiveness. How much he remembered not even she knew, but not a word could anyone drag from him. He would lay his finger where his nose should have been under the mask, and wag his head slyly. "Naw, naw, I was never one for tellin'," he would say. "James Glasson's no such fule that he can't keep 'enself to 'enself."

He lived on for several years in the asylum, and Vashti, after the free and easy fashion of the remote West, took to herself another husband. She went much to chapel, and there was no more religious Methodist to be found than she, and no one harder on the sins and vanities of young women. One thing in particular she held in what seemed an unreasoning abhorrence—and that was a black silk gown.

In Search of Divinity*

By George Moore

II

It is pleasant to remember these weeks, for I was very happy in these first conversations; but the reader knows how impossible it is for me to believe that anyone likes me for my own sake, and at the end of a week—my happiness may have lasted half-way into the second week—at the end of eight or nine days I was trying to find sufficient reason why AE should seek me out in my garden every afternoon. It could not be the pleasure of my society that attracted him. "He is clearly attracted," I said, "by something in me that he has been seeking." But there did not seem to be much sense in this, and on thinking it over again I hit on the idea that he might be seeking me because he recognised me as the spiritual influence that Ireland had been waiting for so long. He was the only one in Dublin who had shown no surprise at my coming, and I dreamed on until his voice called me out of my dream of himself and myself; and as if he had been aware all the time that I had been thinking about him he said:

"As soon as you had lived as much of your life as was necessary for you to live in Paris and in London you were led back to us through Yeats."

"No, AE, not through Yeats. At most he was an instrument, and it is possible to go further back than him. Martyn was before Yeats. I began to be interested in Ireland when Edward spoke about writing his plays in Irish; but like Yeats he was no more than an instrument, for neither of them wanted me to come back. But you did, and somehow I can't help feeling that you knew I was coming back. You had read my books, and it was my books perhaps that made you wish for my return. Wish! Not as one wishes to smoke a cigarette, but you really did want to have me here?"

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"I certainly did wish that England would return to us some of our men of talent."

But this wasn't the answer that I wanted.

"What I would like to know, AE, is, did you wish to have me back for my own sake, because you felt that something was lacking in my books? Or was it merely for the sake of Ireland? I'm afraid the questions I'm putting to you make me seem very silly and egotistical, yet I don't feel either."

"Perhaps Ireland needs you a little."

"I wonder. I suppose Ireland needs us all. But there is something I have never told you, something I have never told anybody."

AE puffed at his pipe in silence, and I strove against the temptation to confide in him the story of the summons I had received on the road to Chelsea. AE's idea of me was not one that saw visions or heard spirit voices, yet he believed me to be the spiritual influence that Ireland was waiting for. "How complicated everything is. . . Nothing will be gained by telling him. I won't tell him." And I sat asking myself if I should be able to resist the temptation. The conversation took a different turn; I felt relieved; the temptation seemed to have passed from me, but a few minutes after my story slipped from my lips as nearly as possible in these words.

"You know that I came over here to publish an article in *The Freeman's Journal* about the Boer war, and the article attracted a great deal of attention?" AE nodded, and I could see that he was listening intently. "If it hadn't been for that article all the Boers would have been murdered and England would have saved two hundred million pounds. Providence has to make a choice of an instrument; you are chosen to-day, another to-morrow; that day I was the chosen instrument, and on the road to Chelsea, thinking of this great and merciful Providence, I heard a voice bidding me back to Ireland. It is difficult to know for certain what one hears and what one imagines one has heard; one's thoughts are sometimes very loud, but the voice was from without. I am sure it was, AE. Three or four days afterwards I heard the same words spoken within my ear while I was lying in bed asleep. But the voice spoke so distinctly and so clearly that I threw out my arms to retain the speaker. Nobody was there. Nor is this all. Very soon afterwards in my drawing-room in Victoria Street, about

eleven o'clock at night, I experienced an extraordinary desire to pray, which I resisted for a long time; the temptation proved stronger than my power to resist it; and I shall never forget how I fell forward and buried my face in the armchair and prayed.

"What prayer did you say?"

"One can pray without words, surely?"

"When the hooker that was taking Yeats over to Arran or taking him back to Galway was caught in a storm, Yeats fell upon his knees and tried to say a prayer; but the nearest thing to one he could think of was, 'Of man's first disobedience and the fruit,' and he spoke as much of *Paradise Lost* as he could remember."

"But AE, you either believe or you don't believe what I say."

"I can quite understand that you're deeply interested in the voice you heard, or think you heard; but our concern isn't so much with it as with the fact that you have been brought back to Ireland."

A cloud then seemed to come between us, and out of this cloud I heard AE saying that if he were to tell people that all his drawings were done from sittings given to him by the Gods, it would be easy for him to sell every stroke he put on canvas, and to pass himself off as a very wonderful person.

"But your drawings are done from sittings given to you by the Gods? I remember your telling me that three stood at the end of your bed looking at you one morning."

"Three great beings came to my bed-side, but I cannot tell you if I saw them directly as I see you (if I see you directly), or whether I saw them reflected as in a mirror. In either case they came from a spiritual world."

"A vision was vouchsafed to you; why not to me?"

"I don't dispute the authenticity of your vision my dear Moore. Why should I? How could I even wish to dispute it? On what grounds?"

"But you seem to doubt it?"

"No. But a vision is the personal concern of the visionary."

"No more! Who sent the vision? Whose voice did I hear? An angel's?"

"Angels are Jehovah's messengers and apparitors, and this I can say, the Gods that inspired your coming were not Asiatic."

"No, indeed; I long ago disassociated myself from the

Asiatic Gods to whom the English are praying that strength may be given to them to destroy the Boers quickly and at little cost. A poor little nation no bigger than Connaught. England became so beastly that I had to come away. The lust for blood was in everybody's face. If the news came in that five hundred Boers were taken prisoners faces darkened, and brightened if the news were that five hundred had been killed. England has made me detest Christianity. . . . Born in the amphitheatre it didn't leave it without acquiring a taste for blood, and the newspapers are filled with scorn of Kruger because he reads the Bible. Think of it, AE! Because he reads his Bible!"

"But don't think of it, my dear Moore."

"It would be better not, for when I do life seems too shameful to be endured. . . . The Bishops of York and Canterbury praying to Jesus or to His Father—which?"

"Probably to His Father. But go on with your story."

"What story?"

"The message that you received didn't come round to you by way of Judea."

"No, indeed, the Gods that inspired me are among our native divinities. Angus, so far as I know him, seems to have been kind and compassionate. So far as I know his clergy never ordered that anyone should be burnt at the stake for holding that it was not the kisses but the songs of the birds circling about his forehead that created Love. All the same, the Druids——."

No one may speak ill of the Druids in AE's presence, and he told me that he did not know of any mention in Irish legends of human sacrifices, and if there had been the Christian revisers of the legends would not have failed to mention them.

"You love the Druids," I said, looking into his calm and earnest face. "When you were earning fifty pounds a year in Pim's shop you used to go to Bray Head and address a wondering crowd! Standing on a bit of broken wall, all your hair flowing in the wind, you cried out to them to return to the kind, compassionate Gods that never ordered burnings in the market-place, and I don't see why, AE, we should not go forth together and preach the Danaan divinities, north, south, east, and west. You shall be Paul. Barnabas quarrelled with Paul. I'll be Luke, and take down your words."

"It would be your own thoughts, my dear Moore, that

you would be reporting, not mine; and though Ireland stands in need of a new religion——."

"And a new language. One is no good without the other."

We fell to talking of the Irish language, I maintaining that it would be necessary to revive it, AE thinking that the Anglo-Irish idiom would be sufficient for literature, until the thought emerged that perhaps it might have been Diarmuid that bade me to Ireland.

"I'd like to see the cromlechs under which the lovers slept, but I don't know where to find them."

AE answered that at Whitsuntide he would have three or four days' holiday, and proposed to visit the sacred places with me.

"We'll seek the ancient divinities of the Gael together." AE pulled out his watch and said he must be going, and we strolled across the greensward to the wicket. "The ash will be in leaf the day we start. I hope, AE, that nothing will happen to prevent us;" and I jumped out of bed every morning to see if the promise were for a fine or a wet day.

I had arrived in Ireland in March; it was raining then, but the weather had taken a turn in the middle of April; the fifteenth was the first fine day, and ever since the days had played in the garden like children, shadows of apple trees and lilac bushes moving over the sweet grass and skies of ashen-blue overhead fading into a dim, creamy pink in the south and east. The hawthorns were in full leaf, and among the little metallic leaves white and pink stars had just begun to appear, and the scent of these floated after us; for no sinister accident had happened, AE called for me as he had promised, and we went away together on bicycles—myself on a new machine bought for the occasion, AE on the old one that he has pedalled all over Ireland, from village to village, establishing co-operative creameries and banks. And side by side we rode together through the early streets to Amiens Street station where we took second-class tickets to Drogheda—an hour's journey from Dublin. At Drogheda we jumped on our bicycles again; two tramps we were that day enjoying the wide world, and so intoxicating was the sunlight that it was with difficulty I kept myself from calling to AE that I felt certain the Gods would answer us. I would have done this if a river had not been passing by; and such a pretty river, a brook rather than a river.

"AE, AE, look and admire it."

A few minutes afterwards our brook or river acquired such a picturesqueness that perforce he jumped from his bicycle and unslung his box of pastels which he wore over his shoulder.

"Trees," he said, "emerging like vapours," and while he discovered the drawing of a brook purling round many a miniature isle, between low mossy banks, I lay beside him, forgetful of everything but the faint stirring of the breeze in the willows and the song of a bird in the reeds. A reed warbler, no doubt; and while I lay wondering if the bird were really a warbler, AE finished his pastel. He leaned it against a tree, looked at it, and asked me if I liked it. It was a spiritual seeing of the world, and I told him that no one had ever seen nature more beautifully. He put his picture into his portfolio, I put mine into my memory, and we went away on our bicycles through the pretty neglected country until we came to a grey bridge standing thirty, perhaps fifty, feet above the shallow river, and the beauty of its slim arches compelled me to dismount, and leaning on the parapet I started this lamentation.

"No more stone bridges will be built, AE. It has come to this, that a crack in one of these arches will supply a zealous county councillor with a pretext for an iron bridge. The pleasure of these modern days is to tear down beautiful yesteryear."

"No arch will fall within the next ten years," AE answered. "Admire the bridge without troubling yourself as to what its fate will be when you are gone."

AE's optimism is delightful, but while approving it I could not keep back the argument that a mountain fails to move our sympathies, for it is always with us, whereas a cloud curls and uncurls and disappears.

"We cling to life because it is for ever slipping from us. Don't you think so? It is strange, AE, that although you know more poetry by heart than anyone I ever met, I have never heard you repeat a verse from Omar Khayyám. You love what is permanent, AE, and believe yourself immortal. That is why perhaps Shelley's *Hymn to Pan* is for you the most beautiful lyric in the world. Do say it again. 'Sileni and Fauns' and that lovely line ending 'moist river lawns.' One sees it all, something about Tempe outgrowing the light of the dying day. Say it all over again, AE."

He repeated the verses as we ascended the hill.

"Look at that hound!"

He came towards us trotting amiably, gambolling now and again for sheer pleasure. The loneliness of the road had awakened the affection that his nature was capable of. He leaned himself up against me, his paws rested upon my shoulders; I fondled the silken ears and he yawned, perhaps because he wished me to admire his teeth—beautiful they were and skilfully designed for their purpose, to seize and to tear.

"Yet, AE, his eyes are gentle. Tell me, is his soul in his eyes or in these fangs?"

"My dear Moore, you've been asking me questions since eight o'clock this morning;" and we all three went on together till we reached a farmhouse in which the hound lived with an old woman. She told us that he had been brought to her very ill.

"It was distemper, but I brought him through it, and now they'll soon be taking him from me. And you'll be sorry to leave me, won't you, Sampson?"

The dog put his long nose into her hand.

"At the end of September," I said to AE, "he'll be taken away to scent out foxes with his brethren in the woods over yonder, and to lead them across the green plains, for he is a swift hound. Don't you think he is? But you won't look at him. If he were called Bran or Lomaire . . ."

We hopped on our bicycles and rode on till we came to a great river with large sloping banks, covered with pleasant turf and shadowed by trees. AE told me that the river we were looking at was the famous Boyne, and he pointed out the monument erected in commemoration of the battle.

"The beastly English won that battle. If they'd only been beaten!"

We rode on again until we came to a road as straight as an arrow stretching indefinitely into the country with hedges on either side, a tiresome road and so commonplace that the suspicion entered my mind that this journey to Meath was but a practical joke, and that AE would lead me up and down these roads from morning till noon, from noon till evening, and then would burst out laughing in my face; or, perhaps, by some dodge he would lose me and return to Dublin alone with a fine tale to tell about me. But such a trick would be a mean one, and there is no meanness in AE. Besides, the object of our journey was a search for Divinity. AE does not joke on sacred subjects. So I rode in silence until a woman appeared with candles and matches in her hand.

"But why should we light candles in broad daylight, AE? There isn't a cloud in the sky."

AE told me to buy a candle and a box of matches and follow him across the stile, which I did, and down a field until we came to a hole in the ground. And in the hole was a ladder. He descended into it, and fearing to show the white feather, I stepped down after him. At twenty feet from the surface he went on his hands and knees and began to crawl through a passage, narrow as a burrow. I crawled behind him, and after crawling for some yards found myself in a small chamber, about ten feet in height and ten in width; a short passage connected it with a larger chamber, perhaps twenty feet in width and height, and built of great unhewn stones leaned together, each stone jutting a little in front of the other till they almost met, a large flat stone covering in the vault.

"And it was here," I said, "that the ancient tribes came to do honour to the great divinities, tribes, but not savage tribes, for these stones were placed so that not one has changed its place though four thousand years have gone by. Look, AE, at this great hollowed stone. Maybe many a sacrificial rite has been performed in it."

AE did not answer this remark, and I regretted having made it, for it seemed to betray a belief that the Druids had indulged in blood sacrifice, and to banish the thought from AE's mind I asked him if he could read the strange designs scribbled upon the walls.

"The spot within the first circle is the earth and the first circle is the sea, the second circle is the heavens and the third circle the infinite Lir, the God over all Gods, the great fate that surrounds mankind and Godkind."

"Let us sit down," I said, "and talk of the mysteries of the Druids, for they were here for certain; and as nothing dies, AE, something remains of them and of the demi-Gods and of the Gods."

"The Druids," he answered, "refrained from committing their mysteries into writing, for writing is the source of heresies and confusions, and it was not well that the folk should discuss divine things among themselves; for them the arts of war and the chase, and for the Druids meditation on eternal things. But there is no doubt that the Druids were well instructed in the heavens; and the orientation of the stones that surround their temples implies elaborate

calculations. At the same hour every year the sun shines through certain apertures."

"But, AE, since nothing dies and all things are as they have ever been the Gods should appear to us, for we believe in them, and not in the Gods that men have brought from Asia. Angus is more real to me than Christ. Why should he not appear to me, his worshipper? I am afraid to call upon Manaanan or on Dana, but do you make appeal."

AE acquiesced, and soon he was on the ground, his legs tucked under him like a Yogi waiting for the vision, and not knowing what else to do I withdrew to the second chamber, and ventured to call upon Angus, Diarmuid's father, that he or his son might show himself to me. There were moments when it seemed that a divine visitation was about to be vouchsafed to me, and I strove to concentrate all my thoughts upon him that lives in the circle that streams about our circle. But the great being within the light that dawned faded into nothingness. Again I strove, my thoughts were gathered up, and all my soul went out to him and again the darkness lightened. "He is near me, in another moment he will be by me." But that moment did not come, and fearing my presence in the tomb might endanger AE's chance of converse with the immortals, I crept along the passage and climbed into the upper air and lay down disappointed at my failure, thinking that if I had tried a third time I might have seen Angus or Diarmuid. There are three circles, and it is at the third call that he should appear. But it would be useless to return to the tomb; Angus would not gratify so weak a worshipper with vision, and my hopes were now centred in AE, who was doubtless in the midst of some great spiritual adventure which he would tell me presently.

The sun stood overhead, and never shall I forget the stillness of that blue day, and the beauty of the blue silence with no troublesome lark in it; a very faint blue when I raised my eyes, fading into grey, perhaps with some pink colour behind the distant trees; a sky nowise more remarkable in colour than any piece of faded silk, but beautiful because of the light that it shed over the green undulations, greener than any I had seen before, yet without a harsh tone in it, softened by a delicate haze, trees emerging like vapours just as AE had painted them. And lying in the warm grass on the tumulus, the green country unfolded before my eyes, mile after mile, dreaming under the sun, half-asleep, half-

awake, trees breaking into leaf, hedgerows into leaf and flower, long herds winding knee-deep in succulent herbage. It is wonderful to sit on a tumulus and see one's own country under a divine light. An ache came into my heart, and a longing for the time when the ancient Irish gathered about the tumulus on which I was lying to celebrate the marriage of earth and sky. On days as beautiful as this day they came to make thanksgiving for the return of the sun, and as I saw them in my imagination arrive with their Druids, two opaque-looking creatures, the least spiritual of men, with nothing in their heads but some ignorant Christian routine, lifted their bicycles over the stile.

"They're not going to descend into the sacred places!" I said. "They shall not interrupt AE's vision, they shall not."

As they approached me I saw that they had candles and matches in their hands, and resolved at any cost to save the tomb from sacrilege I strove to detain them with speech about the beauty of the summer-time, and the endless herbage in which kine were fattening. "Fattening" was the word I used, thinking to interest them.

"The finest fattening land in all Ireland," one of them said; "but we're going below."

I should have told them the truth, that a great poet, a great painter, and a great seer was in their own phraseology "below," and it might be that the Gods would vouchsafe a vision to him. Would they be good enough to wait till he ascended? Mere Christian brutes they were, approvers of the Boer war, but they might have been persuaded to talk with me for ten or fifteen minutes; they might have been persuaded to sit upon the mound if I had. I leaned over the opening listening, hoping their bellies might stick in the narrow passage. But as they seemed to have succeeded in passing through, I returned to the tumulus hopeless. "The Gods will not show themselves while Presbyterian ministers are about; AE will not stay in the tomb with them;" and at every moment I expected to see him rise out of the earth. But it was the ministers who appeared a few minutes afterwards, and blowing out their candles in the blue daylight they asked me if I had been below.

"I have been in the temple," I answered.

"Did you see the fellow below?"

"I'm waiting for him. A great writer and a great painter," I answered, indignantly.

"Is it a history he's brooding down there?" one of them asked, laughing; and I lay down on the warm grass thinking of the pain their coarse remarks must have caused AE. He came out of the hill soon after. It was just as I had expected. The vision was about to appear, but the clergymen had interrupted it, and when they left the mood had passed.

III

As we rode to Newgrange along smooth roads, between tall hedges, the green undulating country flowing on either side, melting into grey distances, AE told me that we should see at Newgrange the greater temples of the Druids; and through his discourses the hope glimmered that perhaps we might be more fortunate at Newgrange than we were at Dowth. It was only reasonable that the Gods should show themselves to us if they deemed us worthy, and if we were not worthy, AE at least, who were worthy among living men? The Presbyterian ministers would be absent from Newgrange; and we rode on, AE thinking of Angus and his singing birds, myself of Midir at the feast among the spears and the wine cups, his arm round Etain, the two passing through the window in the roof; and how all that the host assembled below saw was two white swans circling in the air above the palace.

"Whither did they go, AE?"

"Did who go?" he answered.

"Etain and Midir."

"Towards the fairy mountains of Slievenamon, and on the lake there Etain rejoined her kindred."

"A beautiful story," I replied. "Tell me another, for these legends beguile the monotony of endless roads and hedges," and seeing AE hesitate at the next crossroads, I said: "AE, I'm sure you don't know the way. Hadn't we better ask?"

Whom to ask was the question, for no living being seemed to inhabit the green wilderness; if we came upon a cottage it was locked, the herdsman being without doubt away, opening gates, changing his cattle from pasture to pasture. We rode mile after mile seeking somebody who could guide us, until at last we came to a ruined dwelling, and a curious one, not exactly a cabin, for it was built above

the road and not under it. A rubble heap had to be scaled to reach the one room that remained, and it was in this lonely tenement that we found our guide, a child of seven or eight, dressed in a little shirt and an immense pair of trousers, which he hitched from time to time, a sharp-witted little fellow and as alert as a terrier.

"You've come out of your road altogether, and will have to go back a couple of miles. Or maybe it'd be best for you to go on up this road till you come to the big hill beyant, and then turn to your left."

The little fellow took our fancy, and as we were leaving we turned back to ask him if he was living alone. He said his mother lived with him, but she went out every day to the neighbours to try to get a bit.

"But there are no neighbours. We've seen nobody and have ridden many miles." The little fellow looked puzzled, and on pressing him to say where his mother had gone, he mentioned the name of some town which AE told me was twenty miles away. "Can your mother walk twenty miles?"

"Faith she can, sir, and back again."

"And she leaves you all alone?"

We gave him a slice of bread and butter which he held in his hand, not daring to eat in our presence. We pressed him to eat, and he took a bite timidly, and moved away like a shy animal. As a slice of bread and butter did not seem to us to be a sufficient reward for his directions to Newgrange, I felt in my pocket for a shilling, and asked him how much his mother brought back with her.

"Sometimes a few coppers."

His eyes lit up when I handed him the shilling, and he said:

"That'll buy us two grand dinners; she won't have to be going away again for a long time."

"You don't like your mother to leave you here all day long?" Again the little fellow seemed unwilling to answer us. "But she'll be coming back to-night?"

"She will, if she don't get a sup too much."

"And if she does you'll stay here all night by yourself? Aren't you afraid all alone at night?"

"I am when the big dog does come."

"What dog?"

"A mad dog. He does wake me up out of my bed." We looked and saw his bed—a few rags in a corner.

"But the dog doesn't come into the room?"

"No; but I do be hearing him tearing the stones outside."

"And do you ever see him?"

"When he gets up there I do," and he pointed to the broken wall. "He was up there last night, and he looking down at me, and his eyes as red as fire, and his hair all stuck up agin the moon."

"What did you do?"

"I got down under the clothes."

"A nightmare," I whispered to AE. "But if the dog be mad," I said to the little chap, "he shouldn't be allowed to run about the country. He ought to be shot. Why don't the police ——?"

"How could they shoot him, and he dead already?"

"But if he be dead how is it that he comes up on the rafters?"

"I dunno, sir."

"Whose dog is it?"

"Martin Spellacy owned him." And we learned that Martin Spellacy lived about a mile down the road, and had bought the dog at Drogheda to guard his orchard which was robbed every year; but the dog turned out to be a sleepy old thing that no one was afraid of, and the apples were robbed every year until the dog died.

"Then they were robbed no longer?"

"No, because they do be afeard of his ghost; he's in the orchard every night, a terrible black baste, and nobody would go within a mile of that orchard as soon as the dark evening comes on."

"But if the ghost is in the orchard watching how is it that he comes here?"

The little fellow looked at me with a puzzled stare and answered that he didn't know, but accepted the suggestion that ghosts could be in two places at once. We rode away a little overcome at the thought of the child asleep that night among the rags in the corner, fearing every moment less the dog should appear on the rafters. But we couldn't take him with us; and we bicycled on thinking of his strange story, how Martin Spellacy's apples were better watched over by the ghost of a dog than by a real dog, until we came to a part of the road shaded by trees, and we got off our bicycles and went through a gate into a drove-way. I can see the trees and the gateway quite clearly; there must have been a drove-way, and when I rub

my memory a cottage begins to appear. A woman comes from the cottage and I hear her—the simile of the picture no longer holds good, memory retains sound as well as colour —I hear her saying:

"You won't be writing your names on the stones?"

"On the sacred stones!" I answered.

"Well, you see, sir, tourists do be coming from all parts, and my orders are to get a promise from everyone visiting the cave not to write on the walls. Of course, one can't be knowing everybody that comes here, but I'm sure that no gentleman like you would be doing such a thing."

"Don't stay to expostulate," and AE took me by the arm and we passed out of the shadow of the trees into the blue daylight. A little to the left was the tumulus, a small hill overgrown with hazel and blackthorn thickets, with here and there a young ash coming into leaf. On all sides great stones stood on end, or had fallen, and I would have stayed to examine the carvings or the scratches with which these were covered, but AE pointed to the entrance of the temple —a triangular opening, something no larger than a fox's or a badger's den, and I went down on my hands and knees, remembering that we had not come to Newgrange to investigate but to evoke.

And in the tumulus we remained upwards of an hour, and on leaving it we climbed through the thickets, plucking the tall grasses, mentally tired and humbled in spirit: the Gods had not answered our prayers. It could not have been because they deemed us unworthy that they had not shown themselves, but because of some hostile presence. But we were alone! Could the Gods then be looking upon me as hostile? If they did they must know very little about the human heart. The wisdom of the Gods may not be questioned; and I listened to a robin that was singing in a blackthorn, thinking that the Druids had listened to it. And stepping over the stones that our ancestors had placed so cunningly that they had lasted for four thousand years at least, I asked AE whence the stones had come, for we had not passed anything like a quarry since early morning.

Our talk very likely branched into some learned discussion regarding the antiquity of man. On such occasions one mutters to one's fellow that about a million years ago man separated himself from the ape, but my memory is like an old picture, and on certain places Time's shadows fall heavily,

and I have forgotten everything that happened after we descended the hillside, until AE and I sat down in front of the temple to munch bread and butter. A restless fellow, for no sooner were the slices finished than he began to sketch the stones, and I remember thinking that it was as well he had an occupation, for one cannot talk in front of a Druid temple four thousand years old.

The same landscape lay before me as had astonished me at Dowth, the same green wilderness; groups of trees had been added to the foreground some hundred yards away, but beyond them were the same green undulations. The slender green landscape lay under a heavy sulky summer-time, her bosom swelling into womanhood; in another month the landscape would be all ungainly and melancholy as a woman with child. . . . A numbness stole upon my eyelids and I began to see the strange folk plainer, coming in procession to the altar headed by the Druids. Ireland was wonderful then . . . and opening my eyes Ireland seemed wonderful in the blue morning that hung about her, unfolding like a flower. A great blue convolvulus hanging above the green land and it swelling like the sea. My eyes closed again; it seemed to me that I could dream for ever of the Gods and the mysteries of Time and the changes in the life of Man, of the listless beauty of the sky above, fading imperceptibly as the hours went by. "Roseate grey and purple," I said, "coming into it!" My eyes closed and dreams began, and when my eyes opened again and I looked out across the country, a giant outline showed through the sun-haze miles away.

"Has Angus risen to greet us, or MacLir come up from the sea?" I said, pointing. "That wasn't there an hour ago."

The giant outline grew clearer, and shading his eyes with his hand, AE studied it for a long time.

"It's Tara," he said, "that you're looking at. On a clear evening Tara can be seen from Newgrange."

"Tara, AE! Tara appearing in person to him who is relating the story of her lovers. A sign from the Gods, AE! I'm sure and certain that there is more in this apparition than accidental weather!"

I started to my feet, and at that moment sounds of voices called me back again to 1901 . . . the clergymen were coming through the gate, and askance we watched them cross the field and go down on their hands and knees. We

did not hope exactly against hope, for the larger failed to squeeze himself through the stones and came towards us.

"Let us go, AE."

"Yes, let us go to Tara and escape from these Christian belly-gods."

"But Tara lies out of our road some twenty miles," AE objected, as we rode away.

"But the Gods have shown Tara to us because they await us."

"It isn't there that they'd be waiting for us," AE answered, and when I asked why he thought we should be more likely to meet the Gods elsewhere, he told me that he did not remember that the Gods had ever been seen at Tara.

"And therefore you think that the apparition of the hill as we lay among the cromlechs was accidental? Of course you know best; but even though the hand of Providence be not in it I'd like to go to Tara, for then I could get a glimpse of the great plains about the hill into my dialogue."

AE did not think that descriptions of nature should enter very largely into this play, and he said that any allusions to the woods that Grania roamed with Laban should be drawn from my knowledge of nature rather than from any particular observation of a particular place.

"No one can imagine a landscape that he has'nt seen, AE."

"All my best landscapes come to me in a vision. Last night I saw giants rolling great stones up a hillside with intent to destroy a city."

"Perhaps the hillside you saw was Tara."

"No," he said, "it wasn't. Tara wasn't destroyed by giants, but by an ecclesiastic."

"And therefore was worthless," I muttered, and we talked a long while of the monk that had walked round Tara ringing a bell and cursing the city, which was then abandoned, and Ireland given over to division; "which has endured ever since," I added. AE admitted that this memory of Tara did not endear the hill to him, but that was not his reason for not wishing to go there.

"It is at least twenty miles from here," he said, "and I don't think there's an inn on this side, nor am I sure that there is one on the other. We should have to sleep at ———," and he mentioned the name of some village which I have forgotten. "But Monasterboice is only six

miles from here, and the herdsman's wife will be able to give us tea and bread and butter."

I remember a man telling me that he had gone to Wales to track Borrow from village to village. "I shall not be accused by anyone," he said, "of lacking sympathy for any place visited by Borrow, but all I remember of my walk from Caernarvon to Ethelgebert is that the beer at Ethelgebert was the best I ever drank." This story has always seemed to me so human that I am now tempted to fit it into this narrative, turning excellent beer into tea so delicious that its flavour lingers forever in the palate. But if I were to introduce a thread of fiction into this narrative the weft would be torn asunder, and anyone who knows me at all would not believe that in a cup of tea, however delicious, I could drink oblivion of the lonely ruins of the great abbey through which we wandered one evening. In the hallowed light of a dying day, voices seemed to whisper about the arches, the infoliated capitals and the worn and broken carvings. The darkness of time seemed to lighten, and we saw monks reading and painting in their cells. Within our sight one rose delighted from the Scriptures—he had succeeded in clearing up in a gloss an obscure point that had troubled him for years. We watched another bent over a pattern of endless complexity, his hand moved over the parchment quickly and surely: and in the ghostly silence of the ruins we heard the mutter of a monk scanning a poem, a saint no doubt that had begun to weary of the promiscuousness of a great monastery, and was meditating further retirement from the world. We rode away thinking that his poem was in praise of some lake island whither he would go like Marban. AE remembered some of Marban's lines, and he told me that they were written in the halcyon days in which Ireland lay dreaming, century after century, arriving gradually at the art of the jeweller, the illuminator and the carver of symbols. Marban is a great poet: the lines AE repeated to me are as native as the hazels under which the poet lived, and as sweet as the nuts he gathered from their branches.

Unlike Borrow's admirer we rode forgetful of the excellence of the tea that the herdsman's wife had set before us, full of dreams of a forgotten civilisation, each maintaining to the other that the art of ancient Ireland must have been considerable, since a little handful has come down to us despite the ravening Dane and the Norman worse than the

Dane; for the Dane only destroyed, whereas the Norman came with a new culture, and just when Ireland was beginning to realise herself. If he had come a few centuries later we should have had an art as original as the Chinese. Ireland would have found her voice, but now Ireland will never be able to justify her existence, for small countries are being absorbed one after the other, and great empires are intellectually sterile. Italy, mistress of the world, produced no art worth speaking about, but when Italy was divided into numberless small states, she outstripped all nations in genius, all except Greece. "Florence compares with Athens, Michael Angelo, Donatello, Andrea del Sarto, Leonardo da Vinci, and how many more? There can be no doubt, AE, that empire is fatal to art. England produced Shakespeare, and the British Empire the six-shilling novel. Think, AE, of living in a world without art!" And the thought was so painful that I could not speak again.

The miles flowed under our wheels. We had come so far that it seemed as if we might go on for another hundred miles without feeling tired, and the day, too, seemed as if it could not tire and darken into night. There was no sign of night in the sky, but the earth was darkening under the tall hedges; we passed a girl driving her cows homeward, she drew her shawl over her head, and I said that I remembered having seen her long ago in Mayo, and AE answered, "Before the tumuli she was."

We cycled mile after mile, descending the great road that leads into Drogheda, and as we came down the hill we saw the lamps in the main street; all the rest of the town was lost in shadow, and beyond the town a blue background, as likely as not the sea . . . if Drogheda be a sea-port town.

(To be continued).

Natalia

A Posthumous Sketch by Nicholas Garin*

Translated from the Russian by CHARLES J. HOGARTH

WHEN the servant opened for me the door into the dining-room Natalia Alexandrevna exclaimed as she stared at me with her great dark eyes:

"Oh how you startled me! I could not think who you were. How was it you gave me such a shock?"

Then, after a moment's reflection, she added:

"Somehow you gave me an impression of ill-omen."

"Of ill-omen?"

I felt surprised at this reception, and might, perhaps, have wished it different.

"May I give you some tea?—Do you like it strong?—How many lumps of sugar?" Her voice sounded absent and distraught. "I must be off to the theatre presently, but your room is quite ready for you, and my husband shall show it you in a few moments."

"Is he better, then?"

"He is much the same as usual. I must go now, but I will first tell him that you have arrived."

She rose, caught up her opera glasses from the table, and disappeared. Of medium height, her figure looked slim and graceful in its black gown trimmed with lace—lace that appeared to me in some way to express a desire to charm, a desire to show that there was more lightness and frivolity in her than her nonchalant tone and her serious, unsmiling face might otherwise have seemed to imply. Could it be that that face would have worn a different aspect if my aspect had made a different impression upon her when I entered the dining-room? Why, too, that 'I' of hers—that

* Nicholas Georgievitch Michaelovsky, whose death a few years ago, before he had attained the age of fifty, was a distinct loss to Russian literature, wrote under the pseudonym of "Nicholas Garin," in order not to be confounded with the well-known critic, Nicholas Constantinovitch Michaelovsky. His best novel, "The Childhood of Zioma," in places reminds one of Tolstoi's more famous work, "Childhood and Youth." In addition to being an eminent writer, he was an engineer of some repute, being partly responsible for the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway.

reiterated 'I'? Why should *she* have waited in to receive me, when she had a husband to play the host, and as many servants to attend to my wants as—well, as there would be good-looking young men in attendance upon her that night at the theatre?

Presently she came in again, saying that her husband was asleep.

"Never mind, though. Come along, and I will show you your room myself."

It turned out to be a large one, situated on the opposite side of the flat to her own and her husband's rooms, but on the same side as the drawing-room. With the latter it communicated by an inner door, as also with the dining-room.

"You can lock these inner doors if you like," she said; "but as we have no other visitors at present you are not likely to be disturbed. Here are drawers, cupboards, etc., etc. The drawers in the table too will lock."

She spoke in an absent-minded sort of way. After a pause she went on, evidently unconscious of the fact that she was speaking aloud:

"How was it that you set me thinking of bad omens, I wonder, when you entered the dining-room?" Then a faint glimmer of archness showed itself for a second in her face, and she came near to smiling; yet the smile never actually ripened—it only gave place to a slight shiver as she concluded: "How frightened I was!—Would you mind opening the front door for me? I have to hurry away to the theatre."

I followed her out into the hall. There she stopped, and, turning her head, looked fixedly at me for a moment or two. Then she nodded, as if in answer to her own thoughts, and threw back at me:

"I do not wish to go to the theatre, after all."

"Then why go?"

She was silent a minute; then said—almost with a little air of confidence, "Because I must," and departed. I stood at the door of the flat, and watched her as she descended the staircase to the street. The block was a newly-built one, with broad, well-lighted corridors and brightly-painted inside walls. As her graceful figure glided downwards from step to step I could see at intervals her little foot, with its arched instep. She must have known that I was watching her, that I was admiring her—yes, she must have known it quite well; yet she never once turned

her head upwards to look at me, until she had reached the bottom of the last flight; when at length she did so, but gave me a glance so cold that I retreated to my room again, locked the door, and mentally dubbed myself an ass. Hardly, however, had I done so when there came a gentle knock.

"Would you tell the servants to have the samovar ready by twelve o'clock? Oh, and please go out before I return, and buy a few things for supper." Then once again the same critical, enigmatical glance.

I set to work to rummage my portmanteau for a change of clothes, from among my scanty wardrobe, but without making much progress. My thoughts kept continually turning to the theatre. Indeed, they seemed to be drawn there in spite of myself; to the brilliant scene where there would be so many people and so much life and movement, and where she—But what, after all, was she to me? A mere intangible, shadowy phantom, with little in her—nay, nothing at all—that could influence me; a mere perplexing, elusive—

All was quiet. A clock ticking in the dining-room served but to emphasise the silence.

Ah! There came the sound of a man's slippered footsteps. Her husband's, of course. The door opened, and I saw before me a tall, bent, plain-featured man, clad in a dressing-gown. His face was long and thin, with a sharp nose and scanty, pointed beard, his hands large and bony, and his feet crook-shaped and turned up at the toes. When he spoke his voice had a harsh and grating ring. Involuntarily I glanced downwards, and caught myself picturing him as he might look when laid in his coffin, with those bony hands crossed upon his breast and those large, dead-white feet, with their turned up toes, peeping from beneath the shroud.

I felt almost hurt by him—almost as though he had done me a mortal injury, but I only looked at my watch and said:

"It is eleven o'clock now. Madame asked me to see that the samovar was ready by midnight, and to go out and buy a few extras for supper."

"But it is so late now. The little shop where we buy such things will be closed."

"Oh, then I must go to one of the larger stores. What had I better buy?"

He hummed and ha'ed for a while, then answered with deliberation:

"Potted meat and caviare are what she likes best."

"She likes best." Then of a certainty potted meat and caviare must be procured. Hastily reminding him of the tea-urn, I took the staircase to the street in two strides as he closed the door behind me. Suddenly I was brought up with a start, for there before me stood Natalia!

"Where are you off to at such a pace?"

Gleefully I told her of the potted meat and caviare, but she only answered wearily:

"I could not stop the play out. I found it dull"

There we stood, face to face—she and I.

"But how nice it is out of doors!" she went on, musingly. Instantly I longed to propose to her that she should accompany me to buy the potted meat; yet somehow I could not muster the courage to do so, but went on gazing at her strange, enigmatical eyes.

"Why do you look at me so?"

I lowered my gaze.

"Should I bore you very much if I came with you?"

"You! Bore me?"

It must have been the excessive joy which, I feel sure, was manifested in my voice and features that inspired her too to gather some degree of animation. Off we set upon our errand, but since her cab proved to be a slow one, and we were in haste to reach our destination before the shops closed, we soon changed it for a better. Then we fairly flew. In a moment we were in a shop—a baker's and provision shop. It was with difficulty that she restrained me from too princely extravagance, and when we issued into the street again we were both of us laughing joyously, and gazing into one another's eyes. Surely those were not the same eyes, that was not the same face, which had stared at me so wildly upon my first entry into the dining-room?

It was a wild winter's night, and the wind breathed softly as it blew the snowflakes upon our hands and cheeks and eyelids. The long rows of electric lamps in the roadway shed a prismatic glow upon the lines of massive, brilliantly-lighted houses which fronted the street. I was filled with the most subtle, the most indefinable sensations—with a million of them; yet, although I ventured timidly to rest my hand upon her slender waist, I dared do no more than that, and felt as if I had not a word to say.

And what was *that* little head thinking about as it hid itself behind that muff? And what was the expression on the face which that muff concealed? I tried to recall the

face to my recollection, for I seemed all at once to have forgotten it—to be powerless to bring it back to my memory. I felt as if some stranger were walking by my side—some stranger whom I knew not, and who did not know *me*, but whom I desired—nay, I was determined—to know. And for what purpose? An evil one? Nay, God forbid!

"We must go home now," she said at length.

"So be it," I replied, adding to myself, "and if ever, my dearest one, I allow a single evil thought concerning you to enter my head, may I perish eternally!" For I seemed to know now who she was. She was a poor, suffering woman, whose life had been spoilt for her almost before she had begun to live it.

And that man, slowly dying of cancer or something of the kind! What a ghastly, painful tragedy! And who could say to which of them it was the most painful?

Then, even as though she had divined my thoughts, she gave a little sigh, and pressed closer to me for a moment; and at the movement my heart seemed suddenly to stop beating, and a shiver ran through all my frame. What would I not have given at that instant to know what her real feelings were?—to know whether she guessed what *my* thoughts and feelings were?—to know whether she had actually foreseen what my thoughts and feelings would be as we walked thus together in apparent silence and constraint?

Suppose that, in place of uttering conventional nothings, I had suddenly burst out with all that was in my mind?

Ah! If only we would all of us agree always to express our real thoughts! If only we would agree never to let tongue or eye or other member of our being say aught but the one thing needful—the naked truth! What then could we not make of ourselves, of the world, of our whole lives? Something different, something wholly, wholly different. Better or worse? Better, for it would at least be something new and untried, something from which we could gather fresh breath and start upon our flight anew.

But we are home again, Natalia and I! Once more the familiar staircase confronts us, with its gleaming whiteness and its smell of new paint. The little ear of hers that is nearest to me looks almost transparent under the glare of the gas jet, and the snowflakes nestling in her hair sparkle like diamonds. When at times she turns her head to look at me, the delicate flush on her cheek seems but to heighten the

pure whiteness of her face and the brilliancy of her great dark eyes.

"Are you sure you have not spent too much?" she asked, as she rang the door bell.

"Oh, no. It all comes out of a fund provided for the purpose."

"And was there much so provided?"

"Yes, a good deal. My uncle gave me a thousand-rouble note, and I intend to spend it all in this way."

"But you will spend it too fast. You had better hand it over to me, and let me dole it out to you in instalments."

"Certainly, with pleasure,"—and, laying down the parcels, I was just about to hand her the note when she stopped me, saying:

"Yes, yes,—but presently."

For some reason or other she smiled, and I did the same. At that instant the door was opened to us by her husband. There he stood in his dressing-gown, with his body bent forward and his mouth half open, the whole three of us reflected in a mirror on the opposite wall—he, Natalia, and myself.

What a contrast we made—the living and the dying!

"He would have bought up the whole shop if I had let him. His uncle has given him a thousand-rouble note, so I am going to take care of it and dole it out in instalments."

"Yes, yes; just so," her husband answered, without a smile or any other expression upon his face, as he wrapped his dressing-gown more closely about him and stood back for us to enter.

The hot samovar was singing cheerily on a snow-white tablecloth in the dining-room, with the shining cups and saucers disposed about it. Natalia uttered a little sigh of satisfaction as she made the tea, whilst her husband sat down, with much bumping of his feet against the table-legs, and eyed with mild curiosity the contents of the parcels as I untied them. But when we had begun supper Natalia seemed suddenly to have retired into a world of her own. She sipped her tea in an absent-minded way, and ate almost nothing. Her husband, on the other hand, had a most excellent appetite, and ate some of everything that was on the table, from caviare and potted meat to fruit, cheese, and cakes. To his wife's remonstrances as to what was not good for him he only replied with indifference:

"It cannot matter now, you know, dearest."

II

DAY succeeded day. I attended the lectures proper to my last year's course at the University, accompanied Natalia to the theatre, and skated with her in the Islands Park. She was passionately fond of skating, as indeed of all swift motion.

"How beautiful everything looks in spring!" she cried one day when we were whirling along on skates together, and passed under two giant fir trees bending beneath their burden of snow. Blue sky was gleaming through the open patches between their boughs, and all the frozen snow upon the ground, as well as the snow dust which encircled us like a cloud, was sparkling with myriads of crystals. "How beautiful all the world is in spring, when the birches and the sweet-scented poplars are coming out!"

In general she said little, contenting herself with throwing out and scattering a word or two here and there, and then burying herself once more in her thoughts, feelings, and impressions. I was of a more talkative nature, and felt obliged to deliver myself of every thought which came into my head. By tacit consent we never spoke of these excursions to her husband.

One day she said to me, ápropos of something:

"But, you know, there is no *real* tie between myself and you."

These words of hers would have made a greater impression upon me if they had been uttered in a less cool and detached tone. As a rule, my whole efforts were directed towards giving her no cause to suspect that my feelings towards her had in them anything of passion. And yet, even when doing her such a trifling service as putting on her goloshes for her (my first experience of acting as a squire of dames), I was forced to feign such an exaggerated air of indifference that at last she said to me:

"I will not allow you to put them on for me again."

"But why not?"

"Because you do not like doing so."

"Do you really believe that?"

I burned to say more, but could not get beyond a gesture, since the sight of her beautiful feet made me feel as though fire were being poured into my veins, while my breath came in such sharp and broken pants that only a tremendous

effort of will concealed my feelings. And yet, just when I had in some measure succeeded in stifling them, the old mad longing came back to me again—the mad longing to take her in my arms and kiss her—to kiss her hair, her shoulders, all that form which seemed to me so enchantingly fair!

Yet there were also times when I experienced none of these feelings; and from that fact I derived a certain consolation.

One evening her husband went out to attend a meeting at his club, although, as a rule, he never left the flat. Natalia and I had agreed to go to the theatre together that night, but, after seeing her husband off, she returned to me and said:

"Let us stay at home instead."

So we did so, and drank tea, while she played the piano at intervals and sang to me in her low, strange voice. Though sweet in tone, it was so lacking in strength that it showed to best advantage only when she was singing in an undertone, as though singing to herself. At such times her head—classical in its moulding as that of some goddess—would droop tenderly over the keys, and her eyes gaze dreamily downwards.

Suddenly, that evening, she stopped playing, and cried as she rose from the piano:

"Oh! What a lovely dress I saw to-day!"

She grew quite animated in her description of the dress, until, perceiving that I was not equally interested, she exclaimed reproachfully:

"Does it not interest you, then? Why, *I* love everything beautiful—a statue, a dress, a picture, a flower. Oh, of all things I adore flowers!"

"But what kinds of flowers?"

"Oh, all kinds; but particularly China roses."

"Certainly they smell deliciously."

"And of plants which have no smell I love mistletoe best."

"Mistletoe? Why, that is what the French revolutionists used to wreathe themselves with! And it was mistletoe, alone of all the plants of the world, which had nothing better to offer Loki than poison!"

"I do not understand. Who was this Loki?"

"A god in the Scandinavian Mythology."

She was silent a moment; then asked:

"Do you know—everything?"

"No, nothing," I replied.

"Ah! how I love—"

Instantly I was all on fire, but she concluded quietly:

"—people who know nothing."

Then of a sudden she must have guessed what was in my thoughts, for she blushed deeply, and for the moment I felt as though my heart had been lanced. After that she fell into one of her nervous, pensive, retiring moods.

It was often so with us. All at once her mood would become capricious—full of fits and starts. Sometimes it would last for hours, whilst I, for my part, would strive not to break in upon it, no matter whether I felt indifferent at the time or the reverse. She, on the contrary, never suppressed her moods. She was simply what they made her. Consequently, any change in her mood made all the more disturbing an impression upon me. However, in time she would always come round to the attitude which I loved best; she seemed to do so in spite of herself. It would begin with the dawn of a perplexed, questioning look in her eyes, whereupon I would grow half-distracted with the thought that I might fail to understand her mood aright, and thus spoil everything by my clumsiness. Then I would seem to lose her altogether for a while, and terror would possess my soul lest I should not find her again. Yet, just when I had given up all hope of doing so, I would suddenly come upon her once more—to find, with her, all that I most longed for, all in her that I most loved, in even greater measure than before. At such moments I could have kissed the very hem of her garments, or gone down upon my knees and worshipped her! But of course I did no such thing.

Indeed, I exerted every faculty to prevent her from guessing what was in my mind; lest, if she should do so, I should be deprived, once and for all, of the sacred privilege of her company, of speaking to her, of deriving rapture from her very presence.

And yet, if I had been asked, or if I had asked myself, *what* I felt, or *how* I felt, with regard to her I should have been compelled to answer: "Except when she is present, I feel nothing whatever." And, in truth, so long as she was actually before my eyes I was deeply moved by her face, her eyes, her hair, her figure; but as soon as she was gone I found myself powerless to recall her features to my

memory, and felt no more drawn towards her than towards a lay figure. She seemed to have flown away, and to have left no trace behind her.

During the course of the evening on which her husband went to his club she asked me suddenly whether I supposed that she was in love with him.

"I do not know," I answered.

"Why, how could one feel love for a sick and dying man like that?" she went on, looking me straight in the eyes. "He has been like that for two years now. Besides, he is so jealous and suspicious.'

"Jealous?"

"Yes, jealous. He is quite a different man in private, I assure you. I am tired of his jealousy."

I said nothing.

"It is a long, long time now since I felt any affection for him. When I ceased to care for him I fell in love with someone else."

"And are you still in love with that 'someone else'?"

"I shall not answer."

"There is no need," I thought bitterly, and for the first time I felt offended with her. Of course I tried to conceal the fact, and she made it the easier for me by returning to the piano and continuing to play until her husband's ring at the door-bell was heard.

He, poor fellow, was gasping so terribly for breath that I felt sincerely sorry for him. Natalia went off to bed, but I sat with him a while longer as he discoursed of the doings at his club that night, his old student days, and the term of imprisonment which he had formerly suffered for his political opinions.

III

THE following day, instead of attending my lecture at the University, I accompanied Natalia to the Islands Park—a proceeding of by no means infrequent occurrence. On our way thither she burst out:

"He has asked me to try if I cannot live with him again. It is too horrible!"

I was still a little offended with her, so I only answered in a careless tone:

"Why do you not get a divorce from him?"

"Oh, but how could I cut him adrift in his present state? You see, he has no means of his own. Moreover, he is extraordinarily obstinate. Once, when I ventured to suggest his going into a hospital—!"

I could not help thinking to myself, "You have rather a hard heart," and there ensued a few moments of silence. Then suddenly I caught a faint whisper of "How tired, how tired I am of it all!", and felt her head sinking upon my shoulder. She was weeping! Yes, she was weeping! Tears were streaming from beneath her eyelids and coursing down her cheeks!

I caught her hands in mine, and pressed my face against hers as I cried:

"Natalia, I would give my very life to save you a single tear, to make you careless and happy!"

I felt as though I could have taken her into my arms and covered her face and hands with kisses. I gazed and gazed into her eyes, so filled was I with the thought of her nearness to me at that moment,—yes, and of her dearness also.

"Even though you should live to be a hundred," I went on, "and I also, you would find me still worshipping you as much as ever. I am *certain* now that the reason why you do not love your husband is, not that he is an invalid, but that you never *really* loved him."

"I hardly know. He was clever and brilliant—the most brilliant of all his contemporaries, so, in the end, I accepted him. At the time I really believed myself to be in love with him."

"And, later on, were you really in love with that—'someone else'?"

"No, it was the same thing again. I only *believed* myself to be in love with him."

My heart was beating as though it would burst, but I said nothing. I thought of my avowal to her and of the words which she had just uttered, "I only *believed* myself to be in love with him"—with that "someone else." "*Believed*"; yes, only "*believed*." I stood petrified, fearing almost to breathe; and it needed the greater effort to curb myself seeing that I now divined with my whole being that she was mine.

Then suddenly there flashed into my head: "Yet remember how it was, first with her and her husband, and then with her and that 'someone else.' Are you sure that you are not—another 'someone else?'"

Now, I knew that I was neither malicious nor a cynic, wherefore I felt the more at a loss to understand how such a vile suspicion could have found entrance to my brain—how, at the very moment of winning her, I could bear to show her such disrespect in my heart—how I could suffer myself thus to meet her love and trustfulness with a sneer. I reproached myself vehemently, and strove to drive away such evil thoughts. Then she laid her hand in mine and said softly:

"But we understand one another now, do we not?"

"Yes, yes, my dearest one!" I cried. "Let me kneel down before you and kiss your hand! Let me kiss it in token of my gratitude for the answer which you have just given to my unspoken thoughts!"

So I kissed it, and she squeezed mine in return. Then she replaced hers in her muff as she said timidly:

"But we must not go further now."

No, we must not. So clearly did I recognise that fact that, had she asked me, I would have departed to my lecture, or to my club, or, in fact, anywhere where she was not, where temptation was not. Already I found myself half-resolving to think no more about her. Things should continue as though this had never been.

So we kept ourselves in hand, both then and after our return home, so that all continued as before. Only, somewhere in the deepest recesses of our hearts we both of us knew that something had come to birth—something which we had hastened to cast into an abyss for safety. And after her words, "We must not go further now," I was not the man to leap into that abyss and to drag from thence what she had deemed well should be cast there.

IV

We went to theatres and other amusements together as before, we skated together, and we took turns to read aloud to her husband in the evenings. Sometimes, too, she would play the piano and sing, although constantly passing from one mood to another with bewildering suddenness.

Thus I came to look upon her as compounded of two distinct personalities—the one tender, caressing, and instinct with life, and the other cold, undecided as to its aims and

wants, and, for aught I knew, as ready to throw over one lover for another as to change a pair of gloves. Whether or not this latter personality—shallow, capricious, and even wanton, as it might be—had any real existence in her, she was at least consistently her other self to me, even in public. One day I chanced to meet her unexpectedly in the street, whereupon we were both of us so overjoyed, so almost childishly enraptured that we never gave a thought to concealing what was in our minds, but continued our way together hand in hand.

"I want a keepsake of some sort," she cried. "Come and buy me a rose."

So we entered a florist's shop, and I bought her a large China rose. I wished her have a red one instead, but she preferred the other—a great yellow China rose, with a pale pink flush on its petals.

"But the frost will kill it on the way home," I said.

"Oh no," she answered, "I will place it inside my jacket." And she straightway did so. Then she looked at me, and said with a little *moue:*

"But how cold its petals feel against my skin!"

And at the mere thought that my rose was actually in contact with her bosom the blood flew to my head, and my eyes flashed back at hers. For that brief moment we looked one another in the face without evasion; we knew each other as we were.

Ah, how gaily we walked home that day! And when we had arrived there she went to her room, and returned thence with the rose still fresh and blooming in her hands, to show me that the frost had not killed it. She held it out to me, and I took and kissed it with rapture. I gazed into her eyes, and they glanced back at mine as though they were saying "A-ah!" and swooning with the joy of it all. Her arms, her whole self, reached out to me as though blown by a wind, and I clung to her lips all fresh and rosy with the cold. I glued my eyes to hers, and saw in them an almost famished longing. Yes, I saw in them what I had never seen, never felt, never known, before.

At length, freeing herself, she said with a sigh:

"It is all my fault, for loving everything that is desirable. But look for yourself, look for yourself, and see if any woman could help loving you"—and she turned me to a mirror, into which we gazed, and smiled at one another. Then I fell to kissing her again until my head swam—and we just had

time to fling ourselves into separate chairs as the sound of her husband's slippered footsteps became audible.

When he entered the room she was calmly arranging her hair, whilst I was holding the rose in my hands and engaged in contemplating it absorbedly ; nor, it is but true to add, was I experiencing the least feeling of compunction. He stopped short in the doorway, and eyed us with a chilly glance and an unpleasant smile.

"What a quantity of roses ! " he said.

"Only one," she answered coldly.

"But in your cheeks—?"

"Oh, you are talking nonsense. Go for a brisk walk, and you will have them too."

"No—never again ;" and in his words there seemed to breathe the chill odour of death.

"Oh, how dreadful this is ! " She fell against the table, and lay there sobbing and trembling, with her head bowed upon her arms, whilst we—her husband and myself—stood looking on in silence ; until, springing up, she rushed away to her room, and he and I separated with the blank air of mourners at a funeral.

As I paced my room I looked at the rose and thought to myself :

"But the frost *did* kill it after all."

V

AFTER that painful scene I agreed with Natalia that, although we would continue to be as sweethearts or as an engaged couple, we would allow nothing to occur, before this poor man's death, which might land us in a false position. I must confess that we arrived at this decision, not so much because we recognised any rights of his, as because we wished to spare our own feelings.

Yet our relations tended ever to become closer and more close. One day she laid her hands upon my shoulders, and said as she gazed into my eyes :

"Oh, how hard this is for us ! "

"Yes," I replied, "but things might have been worse. We have at least that consolation."

"Yet suppose it should have to continue another two or three years ? Two years have gone by since I first fell in love with you, and I shall soon be growing old—

shall soon have become a woman whom no one will care to love."

"But my love for you is eternal!"

"What a strange boy you are! You never seem to take any account of things. There is no such word as 'eternal' in the whole vocabulary of physiology. Let, say, ten years, or even five years, pass, and there will be an end both to our youth and to that 'eternal love' of yours. Sometimes I feel almost as though it were I who were the man, and you the woman. What a contrast you make to that 'someone else'!"

"Very well, then; go back to him!" I cried, moving a little away from her; but she only redoubled her kisses and said:

"How I love you when you look like that!"

"Oh, I am not offended, for the contrast between myself and that 'someone else' may be a very great one. You see, I love you, but I also look upon you as belonging to an infinitely higher sphere than myself, and would rather see you lying in your grave than debased to my level; whereas *he*, I take it, viewed love from the earthly standpoint only, so that you were bound to break with him as soon as you recognised the fleeting nature of his passion."

But she answered quietly:

"No, it was *he* who broke with *me*. I showed him my heart too openly, and he did not value it." Then she smiled as she added: "But now he wishes to win me a *second* time."

"And you?"

"Oh, I have told him that my love is *yours*."

"But nevertheless he still has hopes? Well, you might cease to care for me someday."

"Oh, how absurd you are!—what a baby still!"

"Yet the knowledge that he is still in love with you seems to give you pleasure."

"Of course it gives me pleasure; for now, in addition to the rapture of loving *you*, I shall have the satisfaction of letting him see it, and thus of obtaining my revenge upon him."

"Revenge for what?"

"For his supposing that I could never resist him—that I could never love anyone better than himself. But *your* love is as pure as crystal. It is the love of an idealist, of a man ready to worship me. And when did your love first

come into my life? It came at the very moment when I was beginning to despair of ever being anything better than my husband's wife—a wife in name only. Ah, you cannot think what you are to me, nor how madly I adore you!"

And before I could prevent her she had gone down upon her knees before me; looking, with her great shining eyes, as beautiful as a Madonna. Indeed, it might almost have been a prayer that she was uttering as she whispered to me:

"Do not compare yourself with him for a moment! It is an insult to yourself."

I cannot describe the picture which she presented at that moment, nor my admiration of her. Yet I can recall one other occasion (albeit in a different scene) when I saw that same ecstatic look upon her face. It was when we were walking together in the corridor of the theatre during an entr'acte. Suddenly she gave my arm a convulsive squeeze, and on my looking down at her, seemed to forget all that was passing around us as she gazed at me with that enraptured look which I have despaired of describing. Her gaze had such a magnetic force upon me that involuntarily I bent my head to return it.

"Let us go," she whispered, "I cannot stay here longer, for I wish to see no one but *you*, to love no one but *you*. Let us go away and have supper together at a restaurant."

But I kept myself in hand, and persuaded her to return home. On the way thither she burst out hotly:

"But why are you so dreadfully punctilious?"

Such questions on her part always gave me a faint feeling of uneasiness.

"Natalia, my darling, I should not be so 'punctilious' if anyone but you were in question. But how could I expose *you* to the risk, if we took any unguarded step, of having to live down all the grievous consequences which might ensue?"

"Then why was I not made like you?"

She laid her head wearily upon my shoulder and was silent, whilst I continued talking, first upon one subject, then upon another.

"Do you know," she interrupted me, "we met that 'someone else' in the theatre to-night."

"Where? When? Why did you not point him out to me?"

"Well, I *did* press your arm, but you turned and looked at me with such eyes that for the moment I forgot everything else in the world but them."

VI

It was New Year's Day—a day wearisome enough, even in my native town, where there was at least some amusement to be derived from the customary round of visits, but one which, here in the capital, where I had no acquaintances to call upon, was more wearisome still.

"Natalia too felt at a loss, and took occasion during the morning to whisper to me :

"We will go out at six o'clock and dine somewhere in town."

Where should we dine ? Anywhere in the world, since my third thousand-rouble note had reached me yesterday, and was now burning a hole in my pocket.

Our cabman ran over the names of several restaurants, until we stopped him at one, and told him to drive there. Both of us were feeling a little out of spirits, and not a worn passed between us on the way. I was not quite certaid what it was that Natalia had in her mind, but I was *quite* certain what was filling mine to exclusion—namely, a thing which must not happen that day, yet which I knew would surely happen, none the less.

We engaged a private room, and I called for the menu. As I ran my eye down the list of wines, Natalia bent over my shoulder and said :

"Remember that this is our first New Year's Day dinner together. If you like to order champagne in its honour I shall have no objection to make."

Then she moved away to the window, but returned presently, and said as she looked me pointedly in the face :

"And you must drink some of it."

The blood flew to my head, and I answered as though in a dream :

"Ah well ! I will drink some of it if you wish."

The dinner dragged its slow length along. The door kept opening and shutting each moment as, first the hors-d'œuvres, then the next course, and the next, and the next, were brought in. Champagne was opened, and we drank it in tumblers. Throughout the entire meal we remained perfectly silent and absorbed, like two people pursuing the same train of thought.

At length, when the coffee and liqueurs had been brought, she whispered to me :

"Tell the waiters to go, and not to come back again."

My head was swimming, but I turned to the waiters and said—very slowly and a word at a time (for, indeed, I could not force myself to speak faster) :

"Go—and—you—need—not—return."

"Very good, sir."

The door slammed, and I set the back of my chair against it, although I knew that we were not likely to be disturbed. I knew also that something was about to happen which, if it did not happen, would render Natalia and myself strangers to one another for the rest of our lives.

With an almost superhuman effort I forced myself to raise my eyes to hers. She looked down at me in return, and held out her hand with a smile. I took it and kissed it, and something wholly independent either of her or of me pointed further along the way. That something acted equally upon us both. It was necessity. Necessity it was which compelled her to cling to me, which compelled me to clasp her in my arms. I kissed her, I kissed her again, I kept on kissing her. Then at length I looked into her eyes ; and into those eyes I seemed to enter as through a gateway, and knew at last whither that gateway led.

* * * * *

When we left the restaurant I was walking as though in a dream. We did not return home at once, but drove round the Islands Park for a time. Then we went to another restaurant, where we engaged a private room, and sat in front of the fire until two o'clock in the morning.

It was nearly three o'clock when we reached home, and the door was opened to us by her husband. His face looked so ghastly, and his cheek-bones so strangely prominent, that he might almost have been a corpse newly-risen from the grave—newly-risen to receive *us*, newly-wedded after his death, upon our return from the ceremony, and to light us to our bridal chamber !

The situation was so obvious that, without a word spoken, we separated each to our own rooms.

VII

AFTER that, we began frequently to meet in the dining-room after the rest of the household had gone to bed.

Suddenly, one night, we heard the shuffling sound of

slippers, and saw, through the half-opened door which led from the hall, the gleaming light of a candle.

In a second Natalia had disappeared through the inner door into the drawing-room, which was never kept locked. Left alone, I had barely time to fling myself upon a sofa and close my eyes (as though I had been overtaken there by sleep before going to bed), when her husband appeared at the doorway with a candle in his hand. My heart beat violently, and, in spite of my closed eyelids, I seemed to see him clearly—to see a strange-looking figure, with grinning teeth, standing over me.

Every moment seemed an eternity. I felt as though he were kneeling upon my chest and strangling me. Fear took such hold upon me that I could scarcely draw my breath. I longed to shout out, to jump up and hurl myself upon him. For a long time after he was gone I lay with my eyes dilated with horror.

The next morning I had to make an almost incredible effort to enter the breakfast-room. Her husband glared at me as though he would spit in my face—eyed me with all the gruesome ghastliness of mien which only the face of a dying man can wear; and my whole being shuddered with a frenzied longing never to have to behold that face again.

"I am leaving to-day," I remarked.

Natalia, who had hitherto seemed indifferent to everything around her, paused with a morsel of bread in her hand, whilst her face whitened and her eyes gazed at me with an expression of terror and bewilderment. Then she swiftly finished her morsel, and said as she rose from the table:

"I wish to speak to you a moment."

We went into the drawing-room, leaving her husband seated at the breakfast-table.

"What did you mean when you said that?"

"Simply that I cannot go on with this, Natalia—I cannot continue this insult to a dying man. Things will only grow worse with time, for it is plain that the affair is burning itself into his soul with a red-hot iron, and he is losing all self-control. And to think that a man in his position should be brought to such a pass! Did you see his face just now? No, Natalia, we are breaking every sacred principle, and it will end in us all three hating one another. That must not be."

"Let us move a little further away."

So we moved into the next room. There she begged, she entreated, she wept.

"Well, if it must be so, at least take me with you."
"No, that is impossible, Natalia."

VIII

So I moved into other quarters, which I found both lonely and depressing. I saw but little of Natalia now, for, although things remained outwardly the same, a rift had opened between us. Well, it could not be helped.

At length her husband was removed to a hospital to undergo an operation. Though warned that in all probability he would never survive it, he insisted on its performance. In view of eventualities Natalia took for herself a pretty little flat of three rooms—dining-room, bedroom, and boudoir.

"I mean this to serve also as your bedroom," she said as she showed me the boudoir.

"But what about your husband?"

"Oh, his days are numbered."

A week before Easter she came to tell me of his death.

"I have only just come from the funeral," she said.

"Is he dead? Then we are free at last!"

She laid her head upon my shoulder, and pondered a while in silence, whilst I began debating within myself whether I could marry her at once and go away with her to some retired country spot.

"Will you come and live with me at your old quarters now?" she asked, "or shall we both move into the new flat?"

"But what would people say?" I rejoined. "You see, he is only just buried. We must have patience. It will not be for long. Moreover, I have my examinations almost due at the University."

"As you wish," she said, for she and I never quarrelled with each other. "But nevertheless, could you not come and stay with me till Easter?"

"No, really and truly I must work, Natalia; in addition to which we ought to show some respect for his memory, and for what people may say."

"So be it; but let us go to Mass together on Easter Day."

"Well, at least I will promise you this, that if I cannot accompany you to Mass on the Sunday, I will spend the whole of Monday with you."

IX

I ARRIVED very early on the appointed day, and Natalia flew to meet me in a state of great excitement.

"But what are all these things?" I cried; for on the table were lying a diamond brooch and bracelet.

"Only think!" she answered in a flutter, "I have just received these presents from him—from that 'someone else' of whom you know. You see, he is so unhappy about me, and so foolish, that he has actually sent me these things, and this ring too" (here she held up a finger) "for old time's sake!"

A sudden whirlwind seemed to pass before my eyes, and I dashed my hat to the ground.

"One of two things: either you return his presents to him *at once* by special messenger—and I remain, or you accept them—and I go!"

"Oh, but listen—"

I picked up my hat. She threw herself upon me, caught me by the hand, and dragged me to a sofa. Sitting down beside me, she talked for a long time, but I heard not a word. My blood was simply boiling; it was beating in my temples and thundering in my ears. When at length she ceased speaking, I rose and asked her in an icy tone:

"Does it, or does it not, please you to return these gifts?"

"Oh, how selfish you are, with that 'eternal love' of yours—that stupid, impossible 'eternal love'! Yet it does not hinder you from insulting me, from wanting to spoil our day together, or from turning yourself into an odious wax-work figure bearing in its hands a silly label inscribed, 'What will people say?'! Yes, in spite of all your boyishness, there is something as musty about you as though you were two hundred, or three hundred, or a thousand years old at least!"

"Well, perhaps we have said enough for to-day, Natalia," I replied as I took up my hat. She made no answer, and I moved away. Just as I reached the door she sprang to her feet and cried:

"So I am to send these things back to him, am I!"

There were only anger and scorn in her voice, so I left the room. As I did so she cried out once more:

"Very well! Go, then!"

X

THUS, I found myself back in my room once more, and in a most unenviable frame of mind—as a man might very well be who had proposed to spend his day in such a very different manner! Certainly the day was still at my disposal; yet, often as that had been the case before, I had always been able to make my plans for such days in advance. This time my plan had been to spend the day with *her*; whereas now ——!

And she, perhaps, was spending it—was spending it—in—in— No, no! she was not capable of that. Yet what did her actions matter to me now?

I stood at the window and gazed furtively into the street. Half-melted spring snow was falling in large flakes, and the street was dotted with hurrying figures, all plastered over with sleet, and looking white and shaggy.

A fine holiday for me indeed! Why, I might just as well have been at my home in the South country, where the spring had long ago dawned to warmth and sunniness, and where I might have forgotten all this grey dullness of existence.

But a man cannot forget things so easily. Keen as his pain may be, his mind continues working in secret.

Why should I not go and pay her a formal call? I left this question unanswered for three days while I considered the alternative plan of following that "someone else's" example and sending her a peace offering. Should I do so? No, not yet at any rate. She had insulted me, and she must come and apologize.

Three days passed; yet no Natalia.

Perhaps I had not been fair to her. At all events it would be rude to break off even formal relations without some attempt at an explanation. Yes, I would find some excuse for going to call upon her; but I would time my call for an hour when I knew she would probably be out.

* * * *

"Please tell Madame Alexandrevna that I have called."

* * * *

So now I had done all that could rightfully come from my side. If she responded in any way, well and good; if not, then the end; and if the end—well, the end.

Ah, would *that* be it—the end? No, no, not the end! Surely not, just when spring was coming in again—that spring to which she had been looking forward so eagerly! Already there was spring above us, in the tender blue sky, in the transparent air, in the flush of the rosy twilight when the first twinkling star is lit in heaven and hangs suspended there, looking like a large, bright drop of dew. How that star seems to scintillate with rapture—to be palpitating with its play of colours as though it were alive! Truly, Natalia had reason to love the spring.

Ah! that Northern spring! How potent, how irresistible is its magic oncoming! Surely its whirling rush signifies that it is only when every material fetter has been cast aside that the joy of living can be felt to the full. The heavier the fetters, the more abounding that joy when they are gone.

* * * *

It is morning. I have opened my window, to find the air quite warm—yes, really warm. A thin mist is being rapidly dissipated by the joyous rays of the sun, and already I can see a tree covering itself with a web of young leaves, and can hear a resonant hum—the veritable crooning of spring—filling the air.

Yet where, amid all this throbbing world of vernal joy, is my Natalia?—and I hungrily scan the passers-by.

Go, then, Natalia! I am not going to waste the certain present for an uncertain future. Time is a ponderous mill. It grinds the moments, one by one; and it may grind you too among them, Natalia—grind you too among those myriad, fleeting moments!

* * * *

Still no Natalia. Two weeks have passed away, and I feel disheartened as I stand waiting, ever waiting; waiting in tense expectancy—waiting each hour, each minute, each second. Is she never coming? Will she never come again?

A ring at the door-bell! Can it be she at last?

Once more she stands before me—and never has she looked so blindingly beautiful. She is wearing a grey dress, bound at the neck with a black velvet riband, the lustre of which is put to shame by the softer velvet of her eyes.

She holds out to me a rose, a bright red rose, like the blush which is mantling at this moment over the fresh, delicate face of my Natalia. Thus I would have had her look!

My breath catches in my throat, and a mist rises before my eyes. Oh but to rush upon her, to seize her in my arms, to cover her with kisses! Yet, my God! what am I doing? I snatch the rose from her hand and hurl it through the open window!

Her hand, stretched out to me so diffidently, falls to her side again, whilst her eyes seek the floor, and she stands in perfect silence, as though she were vainly trying to steady her nerves. Thus do we stand, face to face—she and I. Yet at the bottom of my heart I feel like a criminal awaiting sentence.

At last, like the first muffled tones of a funeral bell, rung over my own corpse, comes the sound of her voice:

"Very well—if you will not have it so. But—but we might at least be—friends?"

I hear the voice, but only as in a dream, for I am dead to everything but the realization of the one thought: All is now over between us. I know at last how much I have loved her—how much I love her still!

* * * *

Has she gone, then? Yes, she has gone! She has wept out every tear within her and—gone!

But to pursue her, to call upon her, to entreat of her, to tell her that I repent, and that I love her still—O God, how much I love her!

Yet I stand dumb; no words spring to my lips. I stand there motionless, quite motionless. I stand there with a feeling as though something within me were in agony—were dying—were *dead*!

XI.

For a long while I lay in that stupor; how long I do not know. I only know that I seemed to have been travelling a long way under a heavy burden, and to be unutterably weary.

Oh, for some sleep, some sleep!—and for many hours I lay in painful slumber; half-waking at intervals in the fancy that something dark and terrible had me in its clutches, and then once more plunging into oblivion.

At length I awoke to find my eyes bathed with the sunshine which was streaming through the window—the same window out of which I had hurled her rose. I raised the

sash, and scanned the ground anxiously for my poor flower. But how could it fall into a street where thousands of people were passing and re-passing, and yet survive? No, of course the idea was absurd. Yet where was it? There, there on the roof of the portico, looking as red as ever! Yes, there it lay in the bright sunlight, spangled with dew, and its petals fresh and shining!

I retrieved my precious rose, intending to send it back to her some day.

XII

How many days now I have been keeping that rose—that poor, blackened, dried-up rose!

This is the third night that I have spent wandering round and round the Islands Park, so steeped for me in ghostly memories of her. I hover in the shadow of the trees, and look like a ghost myself as I glide through the summer night. My knees are trembling, and my head is giddy with the throbbing of the blood in my aching temples. Around me in the night stillness lie the motionless water, the motionless trees and turf. It all looks like a midsummer night's dream, a waking dream. It is light enough for me to see to read my diary, and the written pages stand out clearly as, bending over them, I decipher them one by one.

* * * *

Ah, it is easy enough to say, "This man is worthless and a dreamer," or, "That one is very wise and practical." Should life strip off the bait, the angling of a wise man may be fruitless, whilst the net of a fool may ensnare its victim. Well, no matter; let it pass. It may be that everything in the world is but nonsense and without purpose; even life itself—my life—the lives of others—the life of—of—

* * * *

Surely I have been asleep a little while? Or else I have fainted, and recovered again in as short a time as it has taken this brief summer's night to glide past and bury itself in eternity?

Was I waking or dreaming? I seemed to be walking with her again. Things were as they were of old, and I was saying to her joyously:

"All is well again now. How, then, could I have cast away your rose?"

And she kept ever repeating:

"You *do* love me, do you not? You *do* love me?"

I can hear her voice still.

* * * *

How the trees smell in the dampness of the morning! A dew has been falling, and the drops are sparkling on the emerald-green leaves in the first long rays of the rising sun. The birds are tuning their voices softly before breaking into song.

How quiet it all is!—how restful!

* * * *

"Ah! You *know* that I love you!"

A New Study of English Poetry

By Henry Newbolt

THE proper use of poetry is to be heard or read, not to be talked about; to be felt, not to be judged or appraised. Criticism, in the ordinary sense of the word, is not applicable to literature as it is to conduct, or to marketable produce. If we analyse at all, it must on the contrary be for the very opposite purpose, to ensure, by laying bare the true nature of Art, that there shall be no more question of any external standard to which Literature should conform, no misconception of literary Art as a method of decoration, to be taught, to be learnt, as a means of embellishing the plain statement of things, no admission of any laws but those inevitably exemplified in every act of creation. We may speak of style, because the more we believe that style, form, expression, is the very art itself, the more we shall desire to convince the world of that creed: the more we shall desire not to establish a rule of correctness, but to encourage that precision and vitality which are the perfection of artistic expression.

This belief is not new, but it is still so little acknowledged as to form one motive for a new study of English poetry. Another, and an even stronger, motive is the evident need for a new attempt to enter into the actual achievement of our poets, and their actual importance to our own generation, in complete disregard of the prestige and the prejudice involved in the common conventional distinction between earlier and later, dead and living writers.

Much has been written about poetry—it has been treated as a part of the history of nations, as a chapter in the evolution of thought, as a series of biographical studies: or again as an art, and even as a craft or mystery. A broader survey has been made by those who from Aristotle downwards have considered it scientifically as a form of human activity: but they have too seldom carried their general principles into an examination of the poetry of a particular country or cycle. The result has been that the great mass of readers, probably willing enough to listen to any direct discussion of poems actually known to them or within their

reach, have turned away from a mainly abstract inquiry and gone back to the lives of the poets or editions of their selected works. The general uncertainty as to the true nature of poetry has thus been continued, with what consequences we know. Poets have been at one time despised, at another almost deified, and again as unreasonably neglected; and these violent alternations have been ascribed by the public to a change in the quality of the poetry produced, by the poets to an instability of feeling in those who should be their readers.

The present time is said to be one of depression. Certainly an age of confidence has been succeeded by an age of confusion. The arts have fallen in market value, and poetry has perhaps suffered more heavily than the rest. Writers who only forty years ago would have been enthusiastically praised and followed, perhaps even lavishly rewarded, are now left to each other's sympathy, or informed through the Press that they leave their readers cold, that they are but Epigoni, the puny descendants of a great ancestry. Here and there a voice is even heard to ask whether poetry any longer exists among us.

Such questions, it is true, come rather from the outskirts of the crowd than from any more central point of view; but they are none the less worth considering, because poetry claims to be everyman's concern, to be a power whose centre is everywhere and its circumference nowhere. It does concern us vitally to know whether great poetry is still written and valued among us; whether it is still, as in the past, the effect and the cause of vigour in our national life; or whether, on the contrary, it lingers only as a plaything for the few, or perhaps as a kind of waste product thrown off by a machinery not yet completely readjusted. It does concern us, if possible, to bring about recognition between the poets and the public.

It must be remembered that there have long been two opinions current about poetry. The favourable view will appear presently; but it has also been held by a large proportion of our fellow-countrymen that poetry is at best a more decorative form of speech, an elegance, a kind of ceremony appropriate to certain occasions, pleasing to certain temperaments, but always otiose and generally esoteric. At the worst, it is thought to be a sort of sugary nonsense, a mummery which impedes the progress of business, an obsolete form of sentimentality, the defeated but

obstinate enemy of scientific truth. It is clear that if this is the right account, then the strongest and subtlest spirits among men have been the most subject to an unworthy delusion; the human lamp at its brightest has burned with a strangely smoky flame. But even so paradoxical a belief as that cannot be effectively refuted unless by an exposition which will account for it, which will go back to the beginning and find the underlying element of truth which has been so perverted. If we undertake this, we shall be asking once more a question which has been put and answered many times already; our justification will be that the answer which has satisfied one generation often fails to satisfy, or even to reach, another: that every age in turn desires to approach the matter in its own way and to be instructed or persuaded in its own vernacular. In the early days of the nineteenth century the language in use was that of Kant, of Coleridge, or of Goethe; then succeeded a Darwinian phase, when evolution was the dialect of thought; at the present moment the terms and methods which will be most readily understood will probably be those of a Henri Bergson and of a Benedetto Croce.

What then is poetry? What is its value? Is it loved for its own sake or for its effects? What has it to do with Life? What is its relation to Science, and to the other Arts: to Religion and to Morality? Is the essential part of it the subject, the diction, the versification, or some peculiar quality of emotion? What distinguishes good poetry from bad? Is the highest poetry personal or impersonal, subjective or objective, the product of experience or invention? What are the possible forms of poetry, and is there any natural limitation of them?

These are some of the preliminary points in our enquiry. Let us begin it with the examination of a simple and generally familiar example. Let us imagine ourselves to be standing on a quiet September evening in a country churchyard, overlooking a characteristic stretch of English landscape. From our place behind the yew tree we can overhear the remarks of those who pass within a few yards of us along the churchyard path. "Hark! bell!" says a child to his mother as the curfew begins to sound, and he exclaims again as he catches sight of the herd of cows winding slowly back to the farm, and the ploughman plodding wearily towards the village. "Yes," replies the mother, "time you were in bed, my son." The farmer

passes with his wife. He points to his cattle. "Some good straight backs there," he says. She is looking at the old bent ploughman. "You can't say as much for poor Giles, but come, 'tis nearly dark." When they are gone there is but one figure left in the churchyard: we hear in the gathering dusk this fragment of monologue, murmured in a voice which seems almost a natural part of the solitude upon which those other voices had for a moment intruded:

> **The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,**
> **The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,**
> **The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,**
> **And leaves the world to darkness and to me.**

There is something different here; every man can feel that. What the other voices said we may forget, probably we have already forgotten; but the very words of this voice and the very tone of it we shall long remember. Yet the difference would appear, when you look into it, to be a very slight one. Each one of the speakers expressed the perception of certain facts; some of them heard the bell, some noticed the cattle, some saw the tired ploughman, some observed the approach of darkness. It is true that one only was conscious of all these impressions, though all the speakers were equally in a position to receive them. We are reminded, then, that an impression or sensation is something offered to us by the external world, which we may accept or not accept. There is no mere passivity in the matter. If an impression is really impressed upon us, if a sensation is really felt, it is because by our activity of the spirit we seize upon it, and represent it as an image, tacitly express it as an intuition, to our conscious self. This, when we are children, we very readily do, and there are some who always retain the child-like power of accepting impressions with simplicity. But this is not common; the course of practical life is against it. For æsthetic, for perception, most of us need what may be called re-education. For in later life, as Mr. Binyon has recently warned us in his *Flight of the Dragon*, "we guard ourselves against impressions, we entrench our minds in habits, we refuse simply to see with our eyes, to trust our senses, but must continually be referring to some external standard or other, which perhaps is not only not valid in itself, but has no real correspondence with our own intuitions."

I remember many years ago seeing a half-finished picture, in which the painter had represented a horse standing in a sunny meadow. The general colour of the horse was a

bright bay; but in the picture there was a strong blue reflection upon its back and a strong green reflection under its belly. I went next day to the meadow myself, to see the painting continued, and was immediately convinced of a truth which my own æsthetic activity had never before presented to my consciousness. Some time afterwards a friend to whom I repeated the story, told me that he had once been equally surprised to see a distinct green colour on the breast of a swallow flying low over grass. Until that moment he had always seen swallows with white breasts, not because they did not often exhibit the green reflection, but because long habit had prevented him from seizing that unexpected variation in his intuition of a swallow.

Still, clearly or confusedly, we do create for ourselves certain experiences, we do seize certain impressions, and express them tacitly to ourselves. We go further, we utter or record them in words or otherwise; and it is to such utterance that we apply the word expression in its full sense of the externalisation of the tacit or inward expression.

Now, it is at this point, at the very first stage of human knowledge, that the common misconception begins as to the difference between poetry and prose, the relation between poetry and science. It is commonly taken for granted that our perceptions or intuitions of the material world are expressions of reality, expressions directly and accurately corresponding to things as they are in themselves. Science is supposed to treat of this reality, while Art deals only with a more or less garbled imitation of it. This dualistic theory is itself unscientific. The simple intuition, the child's inward expression of the sound of the bell, or the appearance of the cattle, is the basis both of art and science, the raw material both of poetry and prose. We cannot know things as they are; we can seize their appearances and re-present them to our consciousness by our æsthetic activity; we can then go further and make comparisons, classes, generalisations, by our logical or scientific activity. The statement, or verbal expression, of the first process will be, strictly speaking, poetry; of the second, prose. When the farmer compared his impression of one cow with that of another, in respect of a point of breeding, he was obviously speaking prose, making a scientific observation. His wife, and the child's mother, were similarly logical and prosaic; they had taken the raw material of perception, and given it

out, not as a simple statement, an externalisation of the internal expression, but as worked up into a concept, an intellectual judgment. They had shown themselves, as we say, practical people, not mere creatures of instinct. The child had not; he had stopped short at the stage of art.

At this point we must make sure of our ground, we must carry no one with us unconvinced. Art, we have said, is simply expression: the act of the human spirit seizing upon a sensation and giving form to it. Poetry is the act of expressing an intuition in words. Is that to be taken as a literal statement? When a child tells himself that he hears a bell ringing is he an artist? When he proclaims his perception aloud is his speech poetry?

In a strictly limited sense, but in a fundamental sense, these propositions are true. Art, poetry, is common to the race; it is the natural activity of every man. When we express our intuitions in any medium, with the intention of simply expressing them and not of reasoning about them, we are all practising art; when we do it in words we are all making poetry. It is true that from the cry of "Hark! bell!" we have a long way to go before we come to an Elegy by Gray or an Ode by Keats. And it is true that in general we only use the words "poem" or "work of art" of very complex and difficult feats of expression like these. Yet the difference is not so great after all between the child's crude elementary bit of expression and the simpler parts of these long and magnificent webs of interwoven feeling and thought. "The Curfew tolls"—is not the starting point the same, the first step identical? "My heart aches and a drowsy numbness pains my sense"—is not that a common experience, expressed as simply as we might ourselves express it? Is it not true then that the poet is not a being of alien birth, that his activity is not fundamentally unlike any activity of our own, but that on the contrary whenever we succeed in any expression of our feelings, our speech hath of itself the nature of poetry?

But we have not yet reached what we commonly mean by the word "poetry"; we have not yet made a poem; we have not done what Keats did when he wrote that Ode to a Nightingale. What then was it that he did?

If we look at the poem analytically we shall see that it is in the first place the expression of two simultaneous intuitions—one of a bird singing, one of a feeling in the poet himself. For one moment he is happy, too happy, in the

bird's happiness; he presents an image of it singing of summer in full-throated ease. Then he longs for a draught of vintage—of which again he presents a vivid image, with beaded bubbles winking at the brim, as well as images of the scenes which it might recall—dance and Provençal song and sunburnt mirth—and this magic vintage he would drink that he might with the nightingale fade away into the forest dim, and escape his own misery, typical of the misery of man, which he presents by a series of abstractions, weariness, fever, fret, leaden-eyed despairs and pining love. He sets over against this the scene of the bird's life among the leaves, where tender is the night, where there is no light save what from heaven is with the breezes blown, but where in the embalmed darkness he can by a guess perceive the grass, the thicket and the fruit tree wild, the fast-fading violets and the coming musk-rose. The contrast between this and the life of man is so sharp that he desires death, and presents the image of his own death in such a scene. Then by another contrast he reflects on the bird's immunity from death—its song is among the immortal things of the worl,d for ever born afresh: perhaps the self-same song heard by Ruth, whose image he calls up as she stood in tears among the alien corn; the same song as that told of in old legends, whose enchanting beauty he remembers in two lines of pure romantic perfection. Lastly, the chance word "Forlorn" sweeps down the whole web; as it falls the living bird too flits away; the poet's final intuitions are of the song that fades past the near meadows, over the still stream, and of a new feeling in himself, a sense of bewilderment between waking and sleeping.

This is something much more than the expression of a simple intuition, or of a series of simple intuitions. It is a fabric of considerable extent and of great richness, into which are woven pictures of things seen and pictures of things imagined, present feelings and feelings remembered from the past, thoughts and judgments of several kinds. Does the inclusion of these thoughts, which belong properly to the logical activity, alter or dilute the poetical character of the work? No, the elements of the poem are not set down as I have set them down, in analytical prose, but are, as it were, melted down into one single intuition, a complex intuition, grasped and expressed by one single act of the spirit. Just as in a marble pillar we may see the fossilised creatures of a former world, creatures that once were

molluscs, infusoria, coral insects, with a life and functions of their own, but now are so embedded and changed in substance as to become one homogeneous mass, of another nature and fitted for another purpose, so these various intuitions and concepts, these thoughts, memories, reflections, contrasts, images real or invented, are no longer what they were, but have all passed into the deepest stratum of the poet's soul, and become both the substance and the pattern of the marble out of which his colonnades are hewn. It is in this manner that Natural Science, and every other exercise of man's reasoning power, may, in spite of belonging to a separate and very different activity, yet provide material with which to enrich the poet. He has all knowledge and all memory to draw upon, if he can but transmute them to the stuff that dreams are made of.

But now, even if we have reached an agreement as to the nature of poetry, we have still to consider the practical question, What is the use of poetry, what is the pleasure or satisfaction derived from it?—and is this the same in the case of the maker of the poetry and the reader of it? If not, is the difference a necessary and permanent one? Is it liable to increase or diminish from time to time, and does this cause the fluctuations of which I spoke, the alternations of popularity and unpopularity which poetry suffers? If so, with whom does the fault lie—with the poets or with the public?

The satisfaction, the pleasure, of the poet is soon ascertained. His object is expression; he attains it in his poem —to a greater or less degree: he has his reward, and it is one exactly proportioned to his success. With the public the case is different. It is, of course, always open to a reader to surrender himself entirely to the direction of a chosen poet, to place himself at the same point of view, to receive his intuitions from him, and thereby to share the joy derived from their expression. This is the true way, but it is not the way which readers are always willing to take. Life is their object, and art is not their life, though it is the artist's. If, then, they come to the artist, it is for something that will help them to a fuller life, and they demand of him not merely that he shall excel in expression, but that he shall excellently express feelings such as they can understand and value. They demand that he shall chant to them, for example, their own morality, their own religion, their own patriotism. But his morality, as artist, is to be sincere, to

have no end to serve except his art itself; for him as artist, art is his religion and his native land. Incidentally, as a man, he may have intuitions to express, which are those of the public, too; he will then perhaps be popular, but only while he keeps to the popular feelings.

Is this divorce of interests so complete? Is it only incidentally that poetry can ever find favour? Is there nothing which the soul of the poet and the soul of every man have in common—no vital desire or satisfaction?

We have considered poetry from the scientific point of view: let us for a moment from the same point of view consider life. What life is we do not know, but for my present purpose it is not necessary that we should know. For the reconciliation which we desire it will be sufficient to find some element in life, some aspect of life, as it appears to our human vision, which is a vital part of poetry, and is also recognised by every man without distinction as vital to himself. I will set forth very briefly what I understand to be a view of life, hypothetical indeed, but characteristic of the scientific thought of the present day. In this view we are placed in a world where there exist two great antagonistic forces—consciousness and matter. They are antagonistic in this, that matter is naturally the sphere of fatality or necessity, while consciousness is naturally the sphere of freedom. Their antagonism must be remedied by life, which is simply consciousness attempting to turn matter to its own uses, to the uses of freedom. For only in freedom can life realise itself in the highest degree, and the desire for self-realisation, the desire that we may have life and have it more abundantly, is the impulse which urges us all. We are all vessels, channels, vehicles, of one and the same spirit. This is no new philosophy, it is one which shines out from time to time, and is eclipsed again, to reappear under a different form. It is an axiom of Christianity, but in certain periods so completely obscured that after 1800 years an English poet could restate it as being in his view "a grander system than the Christian religion." In one of John Keats's letters this passage occurs: "There may be intelligences or sparks of the divinity in millions, but they are not souls till they acquire identities, till each one is personally itself . . . How then are these sparks, which are God, to have identity given them—so as to possess a bliss peculiar to each one's individual existence? How but by the medium of a world

like this?" But Keats left it for a poet of our own time* to achieve the perfect expression of this idea.

> It is not we that are strong
> But the cause, the divine desire,
> The longing wherewith we long.
> O flame far-springing from the eternal fire,
> Feed, feed upon my heart till thou consume
> These bonds that do me wrong
> Of time and chance and doom,
> And I into thy radiance grow and glow entire!

The statement of this as a scientific hypothesis will be found in the works of Professor Bergson.†

"The spectacle of the evolution of life from its very beginning down to man suggests to us the image of a current of consciousness which flows down into matter as into a tunnel." The current has found resistances, it has been obliged to split up, and dig galleries, most of which are stopped by rock that is too hard. In two directions alone has it achieved any success. Along the line of instinct it has reached the activity of the ant and the bee: along the line of intelligence it has in the human intellect escaped from the tunnel and become self-conscious. "What has been gained by forcing this tunnel, and why did life start on the undertaking?" The answer suggested is that matter plays, in relation to consciousness, the part of a hindrance which provokes effort and makes it possible. "The effort is painful, it may be very painful: and yet, whilst making it, we feel that it is as precious as, and perhaps more precious than, the work it results in, because, thanks to it, we have drawn from ourselves not only all that was there, but more than was there: we have raised ourselves above ourselves." In short, matter, the evil in the world, is at once obstacle and stimulus to our spiritual activity.

Yes, but the effort is painful: and, though it has been so far successful that the torrent of life has emerged from the tunnel of unconsciousness, it is still hindered and broken by the impediments in its course. These millions of intelligences, these sparks which are God, have had identity given them; but there is still much to mar that "bliss peculiar to each one's individual existence"; their flame has not yet consumed "these bonds that do us wrong, of time and chance and doom." Life, for all its mastery of the material world, is still imperfect, conditioned, unsatisfying. Have we no other resource?

*Laurence Binyon: *Odes*, p. 25.
†In *L'Evolution Créatrice*, and in the essay on "Life and Consciousness."

I think we have. Bacon observed, long ago, that while Science is a subjecting of the mind to things, Art is a subjecting of things to the mind. From a time far longer ago than Bacon, man has kept his spirit alive by the choice of that alternative. Always he has observed and followed more and more carefully the laws, the invariable relations, of matter, and he has done well, though he has too often—especially on our western side of the world—sacrificed instinct to intellect. But always he has felt that he is only obeying conditions not truly understood, bowing to laws which have no sanction but force. He has triumphed in the intellectual splendour of the discoveries of Science, and reaped rather greedily their practical results: but always in his city of pain, in his house of life, in his inner chamber of memory and hope, the murmur of his unrest has been ceaseless. He has never forgotten that other way, the way not of subjection but of supremacy, the way of imaginative Art. He has never forgotten to seek consolation and delight in the re-creating of the world, in grasping this sorry scheme of things, and re-moulding it nearer to the heart's desire. Here, in my belief, is the point of reconciliation, here is the common element which poetry holds for us all, not only for the poets but for every man. This is the criterion of great poetry, that it touches the universal longing for a perfect world.

Is this too slight or too remote a bond of sympathy? Or is there on the contrary no commoner or deeper truth than this, that there are two worlds to which every man simultaneously belongs? He lives by his bodily senses and his intellect in a world of matter, governed by "laws of nature." Its language is the language of reason, its statements are such as can be verified by calculation: it is the world of prose. To anyone living wholly in this world, if that were possible, beauty would be merely one particular arrangement of molecules, not more interesting than another, except perhaps as the ascertained cause of a pleasurable excitement of the nerves. His representation of it would be either a diagram or a photograph: in either case a mere imitation of nature: purely prosaic.

The other world is ours too: we know it if only by the pain which this one continually gives us. As Komachi sang —the woman poet of Japan—"It is because we are in Paradise that all things in this world wrong us: when we go out from Paradise nothing hurts, for nothing matters."

When we enter this Paradise of Komachi's we are with the poets, whether we know it or not. The illimitable blue above the earth-cloud: the shoreless sea into which we would plunge back from our desert island: the universal life in whose freedom all is good—it is Art that gives us this: and poetry is the living voice of Art: the emotion of life made audible. It reminds us of that which is both our native land and the far country of our pilgrimage. We recognise again in every supreme moment of Art that unremembered, unforgettable kinship, "O born with me somewhere that men forget." Even while we are trudging among the roaring mechanism of our civilisation, we can always hear any word that is spoken in the language of our home.

> **"And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,**
> **Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;**
> **There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,**
> **And evening full of the linnet's wings.**
>
> **I will arise and go now, for always night and day**
> **I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;**
> **While I stand on the roadway or on the pavements grey,**
> **I hear it in the deep heart's core."** *

And it is to be noted that this longing, which in one way or another, is the inspiration of all the "passionate moments" of great poetry, is not merely a desire to create "a shadowy isle of bliss, Midmost the beating of that steely sea, Where tossed about all hearts of men must be"—it is not merely an escape, a refuge, an oblivion. It is a longing for a real transformation of life, a transmutation of a world of good and evil into a world of unalloyed beauty. Even the poet whose lines I have just quoted, even William Morris, though he called himself the idle singer of an empty day, was never satisfied to escape from life and forget it. In his Earthly Paradise we are never for long untouched by the home sickness of the spirit: in his Epics, *Sigurd the Volsung* and *The Lovers of Gudrun*, as in all true Epics, we are carried into a world transfigured by heroic ardour and heroic endurance. This is still more characteristic of great tragedy. Life is never so free nor so triumphant in this world, as in the moment when this world has been defied past reconciliation; the moment when the last ship has been burnt and the last fight lost; when the bright day is gone and we are for the dark; when Cleopatra calls to Iras:

* W. B. Yeats: *The Lake Isle of Innisfree.*

> Give me my robe, put on my crown: I have
> Immortal longings in me . . .
> I am fire and air: my other elements
> I give to baser life.

Is not lyrical poetry, too, the outcry of the spirit in sorrow because of earth's limitations, or in joy because for a moment they are powerless? Both are heard in Coleridge's Ode:

> O Lady! we receive but what we give,
> And in our life alone does Nature live:
> Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud!
> And would we aught behold, of higher worth
> Than that inanimate cold world allowed
> To the poor loveless, ever-anxious crowd,
> Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
> A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud,
> Enveloping the Earth——
> And from the soul itself must there be sent
> A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
> Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

Penetrating as that is and apt for my purpose, it is not more so than Mr. Bridges' beautiful Elegy, called "Recollections of Solitude,"* which ends with this hymn to Poetry:

> O heavenly Muse, for heavenly thee we call,
> Who in the fire of love refinest all,
> Accurst is he who hark'neth not thy voice;
> But happy he who, numbered of thy choice,
> Walketh aloof from nature's clouded plan:
> For all God's world is but the thought of man:
> Wherein hast thou re-formed a world apart,
> The mutual mirror of his better heart;
> There is no foulness, misery, nor sin,
> But he who loves finds his desire therein,
> And there with thee in lonely commune lives:
> Nay, all that nature gave or fortune gives,
> Joys that his spirit is most jealous of—
> His only-embraced and best-deserving love,
> Wear their eternity and are loved best
> By thee transfigured and in thee possest:
> Who madest beauty, and from thy boundless store
> Of beauty shalt create for evermore.

This passage not only shows us once more how by poetry man may walk "aloof from nature's clouded plan" and "re-form a world apart," but it contains a further reflection which is the answer to a possible doubt. The theory that Art is an imitation of nature has long ago been explained away; but undeniably there is great poetry which might be described as realistic: which comes near to daily life, both in its subjects and in the use of very simple or common

* Published in the *Monthly Review* for February, 1903, and not yet reprinted.

speech. The sonnets of Shakespeare, those other sonnets which time has set beside them—George Meredith's Modern Love—the Songs and Sonnets of Donne, the Dramatic Lyrics of Browning, the Wessex Poems of Thomas Hardy—these are the most familiar examples. These abound in passionate moments, but is it with the voice of the imagination or of what is called "the real world" that they stir us?

They stir us—the answer is there: they stir us to exultation, to laughter, to tears. But the "real" world, the world of reason, of commonsense, of prose, has of its own nature, no passion, no humour, no true drama. It is built on other foundations altogether, on calculation, on legality, on efficiency: it is a world where Peace Conferences propose to eliminate the honour of nations, and juries to assess the value of love in cash: where one popular author will write books to tell you that feeling is only useful as a means to thinking, and another will write plays to persuade you that poverty is a crime and love an untruth to nature, and romance the source of both these evils. In such a world—in a world of pure argument—what passion, what humour, what drama could there be? These do exist in "real" life, but only in that part of it where the two circles of the practical and the poetical intersect: where the two worlds meet and are one. In that region, as the Muse taught Mr. Bridges so clearly, all our natural joys exist, but natural as they are, and "real" as we call them, they are so only because they are by poetry transfigured and in poetry possest: otherwise they would be merely subjects for the laboratory. There, I suppose, one or other of the sciences would reduce part of them to useful appetites, and reject the remainder: Art alone preserves the passions by transmuting them.

These lyric poems then are among the greatest, and also among the nearest to everyday life. They are so great and so near, that they seem to give in brief eternal moments that very insight and purification which tragedy gave to an earlier world. The growing recognition of this, the growing preference for lyrical poetry, is from time to time deplored by some of our contemporary critics. I do not myself see why a reader is unreasonable if he prefers a fine lyric, perfect in itself, to a fine passage from an epic or a play of much larger bulk but of unequally sustained beauty. The intuition or the dramatic power expressed in the one may be as great

as that elaborated in the other: as Whistler once said, when his etching was rejected as too small, a work of art is not estimated by its acreage. In any case the poets should escape condemnation, for all the best now living among us—Mr. Binyon, Mr. Bridges, Mr. Doughty, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Hewlett, Mr. Sturge Moore, Mrs. Woods and Mr. Yeats, have written poems of orthodox form and size, and of much more than orthodox beauty. It is true that in their shorter poems they have almost all moved us with an even greater because more concentrated power. My reading of that fact is that it is a sign of the return of man upon his too hurried trail, the advance in which he gained so much, but threw away so much upon the march: a return to the way of intuition, to rapture, to direct swift vision: to a more instinctive joy at the sound of every voice from the Land of Heart's Desire. It will be remembered how Matthew Arnold lamented that "Gray, a born poet, fell upon an age of prose, an age whose task was such as to call forth in general men's powers of understanding, wit, and cleverness, rather than their deepest powers of mind and soul." The poetry of that century was therefore "intellectual, argumentative, ingenious: not seeing things in their truth and beauty, not interpretative." In moments of depression this may recur to our minds as an analogy, but I do not think that depression is justified. In the life of this generation, as in that of others, there is much that is materialistic, argumentative, prosaic: but for spiritual depth and intensity, as for rhythmical beauty, its poetry is unsurpassed. It is true that though the poetry is great, there are no "great poets," but who would think that if peerages were abolished nobility would cease? It is merely a confusion of thought. And if this is an age of confusion, I believe it is only because it is an age of rebuilding: science, religion, philosophy, and social life are all under scaffolding: no wonder the poets are not so visible as they were. But there are some of us who feel that criticism should be rebuilding, too; that a revaluation of English poetry might now be welcome, in which no allowance should be made for antiquity, reputation, resemblance to great literary ancestors, place in evolution, services to Church or State, learning, intellectual brilliancy, impeachable or unimpeachable morals, or any other extraneous merits; but in which the work of every poet, living or dead, should be judged by one and the same criterion. As to what that criterion should be, I am

aware that the view which I have here proposed is not widely different from that set forth by the most honoured of my predecessors; but I venture to hope that it may be so applied as to produce what may be not unreasonably called a new study of English poetry.

(To be continued.)

The Old Ladies of Etching-needle Street

By Walter Sickert

I HAVE never forgotten a brief but pregnant conversation at which I assisted in the early eighties over a muffin and a cup of tea. An ambitious young student at one of our Government Schools of Art was lamenting the fact that, try as he would (and to do him justice he had brought to the task a keen and critical intelligence and a ferocious determination to "arrive," by hook or by crook) he could not learn to draw. There was a pause in the conversation; the angel of success flew through the room and touched the young man with his wing.

"Why don't you etch?" said a young lady who was present, and sealed his fate.

My friend has spent a useful and honourable life in tracing on to copper the outlines of many an interesting instantaneous photograph, and in filling in the tones as best he may, with ingenuity, taste, and intelligence. Some writers, better journalists than critics, hailed him at once as an exquisite and remarkably prolific etcher. But, in the long run, the astonishing snap of the outlines, which *can* be traced, combined with the no less astonishing nullity of the modelling, which *cannot* be traced, "blew the gaff." As Balzac says, "*La certitude est comme le soleil, elle ne se laisse pas longtemps attendre. Elle exige bientôt des stores.*"

Haden, I believe, once wrote an article on the subject of "The Ruled Line in Etching." My present task is not with the camera in etching, or in drawing, or in painting, for the matter of that. I reserve that for future and exhaustive consideration. In passing I may perhaps lay down, upon this subject, the following safe rule. The camera, like alcohol, or a cork jacket, may be an excellent occasional servant to a draftsman, which only he may use who can do without it. And further, the healthier the man is as a

draftsman, the more inclined will he be to do without it altogether. For a student who cannot, or will not, learn to draw, the camera spells suicide—neither more nor less.

My business at present is with the moral of the above anecdote, the fragment of dialogue stated thus—"I cannot learn to draw." "Then why don't you etch?"

My present business is to show that the young lady, whom nothing will induce me to name, spake better than she knew; and that she summed up in those six words the greater part of a whole "movement," not only retrospectively to '65, or thereabouts, but, prophetically, to the year of grace 1911.

A great deal of copper has passed between the roller and the plank, not in spite of the fact, but because the authors could not draw. The authors have scratched and bitten in all innocence, aided and abetted by more dangerous colleagues, who advocated the devil, alas, not only with the innocent needle, but also with the deadlier quill.

We may take it that Hamerton's "Etchers and Etching," published in 1868, three years after the publication of a selection of etchings by the Etching Club, marked what is commonly called the "Revival of Etching" in England.

Mr. Wedmore's last volume, "Etchings," may be said to be a garnering, nay, a gleaning, pursued with taste and learning, of the results up to date of this so-called "revival." Let us face the fact that the "revival" was a revival *ad hoc*, and that, so far as the art of etching goes, it was rather a galloping decline.

When I came back to England about six years ago, after a long absence abroad, I found among my friends, rampant and flourishing, an expression which filled me with horror. A was said to show himself invariably "nice" about B's work. Terrible phrase. The fact must be faced that in criticism on work, illustrations of which are published with the text, the letterpress must suffer from the bias that the obligation of the writer to his illustrators necessitates. The writer cannot exactly mete out severe justice to the artists, or the dealers, or the collectors, who are enabling him to bring out a handsome volume. So that, while the dilettante and collector find themselves painlessly ushered into the becoming æsthetic pew in the congregation that professes the correct shade of well-thinking, the ill-mannered and curious student, who cares only for the truth, must seek in minor admissions, in suspiciously emphasised protests

of half-hearted admirations, clues to the past and finger-posts for the future.

Mr. Wedmore, somewhere in his book, and now I cannot find it, seems to me to describe something as being in, or not being in, "the Movement." In Heaven's name, my dear Wedmore, what Movement? *What* Movement? Where? In what direction? Give us, who stand receptive with open mouths, a table, in white chalk on a big black-board, of the kinetics of the above-said Movement. I have spent a week pouring hot salt and water into the crevices of your admirably laid book for the particular worm I want, and here it is.

The true craftsman is invariably honest, and is, in general, so filled with the fury of assertion, as to be utterly indifferent whether what he says will be taken down and used in evidence against him or not. Béjot, and I take off my hat to him, speaking of Antonio Canale, has said, you tell us, that his prints were never too black. "We modern people misuse black, we exaggerate it." *Voilà le fond du fin fond.* There is the fruitful germ in your book, Mr. Wedmore.

Before it is possible to connect the past with the future of etching, a brief examination must be made of the claims, now almost universally set up by the whole army of secondary writers on Art, for the etchings of Whistler.

Hamerton is supposed to be old-fashioned and superseded. I remember with delight a lesson in the art of controversy that Whistler gave me in the early eighties. He said: "You go to work in a ponderous German manner, answering objections, controverting statements of fact with tedious arrays of evidence. Now that's no use at all. People haven't time. When a tiresome person bears down on you with a stodgy array of learning and argumentation, what you've got to do is simply to say:—'Stocking!' Don't you know? Ha! ha! That's it! That's controversy! 'Stocking!' What can they say to that?" I don't suppose that this lesson has ever been published, and I am rather glad that I happen to remember it, as it embodies, in a concise and delightful form, a considerable part of Whistler's theory and practice in controversy. In spite of the fact that Whistler said "Stocking" to Mr. Hamerton several times, Hamerton's criticism of Whistler's etching published in '68 remains unshaken, and amounts to this, that Whistler's Thames etchings were not *finished*, but simply *left off*, which is a different thing. They were left off because he had not the artistic training and experience needed to build up his

plates from drawings, and because he had not yet tapped the well of free and inspired improvisation from nature, which he eventually reached in such plates as "The Rialto." The bulk of Whistler's work is still admired for the wrong reasons, and, I had almost said, by the wrong people.

Till it occurred to Mr. Fry, overballasted by excess of learning, and to Mr. Lewis Hind, flighty perhaps for the opposite reason, to take it into their amazing heads to find salvation in the "spoof" of Matisse and Piccasso, the critical Press has been somewhat gravelled for lack of matter. In etching there is always a subject ready to hand. The old, old plates are trotted round again, dowagers speak of "etchin's" without a "g," the words "dry-point" and "retroussage" are Mesopotamia to the budding press man, and sweet seventeen lisps to Sir Sidney Colvin in the Print room, a blushing and urgent request for the etchings of Whistler. In fact it is extremely probable that she does not know the name of any other etcher at all, so efficaciously have the megaphones of repetition done their work.

I think that Poynter was mistaken in deploring, as he did to the horripilation of the more abject Whistlerians, Whistler's lack of a sound training in drawing. May not the very amateurishness of Whistler's equipment as a draftsman have been to him a blessing in disguise? The homing instinct that guides the perilous flight of the lonely talent to its appointed end, like the way of a man with a maid, defies analysis. Was it not perhaps that very amateurishness that, refusing to him, over and over again, achievement on lines of ordered composition, threw him back, baffled and in despair, on the cultivation, to the pitch of exquisiteness, of his genius for swift improvisation from nature. His method was not suited, it is true, to bring out the topographic interest of architectural subjects. I remember that it was not till I had brought a mirror that I could convince the owner of the Cà d'Oro that one of Whistler's etchings ended next door to his own palace. But in scenes like "The Long Lagoon" or "The Rialto," there is a flower-like charm, a magical breath of life and immediateness, that not only justifies itself, but confers dignity and importance on every step, however stray or halting, in the long road they had behind them.

The truth about Whistler and about the whole "revival" in England, is that it was an interesting and sincere amateur revival, closely based, to begin with, on the pro-

fessional revival in France of which Charles Jacque may be considered to have been the master. From this statement we must except with a big chalk mark the work, in England, of Samuel Palmer, both the work and the man being violently out of sympathy with what I will continue to call for convenience the English "revival," its methods and all its consequences.

The wise man will frequently turn to a book rather for what the writer does not wish to tell him, than for what he does. I have spoken of the English revival of etching as a revival *ad hoc*, and I propose later to justify that description. It may be compared to another revival *ad hoc*, the so-called "revival" in England of the art of lithography in 1895. Only a person of execrable taste like myself could have the heart to turn to a sympathetic and pious memoir of a master-workman to seek for crushing condemnation of what were probably that workman's most cherished opinions. "'Frederick Goulding, master-printer of copperplates,' by Martin Hardie, A.R.E., published by Eneas Mackay, 43, Murray Place, Sterling, MCMX.," is precious, historically, as registering, with sufficient clearness, the low watermark in the practice and theory of etching to which the "revival" has brought us. It also contains incidentally an account of the *occasion* for the lithographic "revival." Mr. Hardie writes: "In the autumn of 1895 a centennial exhibition of lithography was held in Paris. Lord Leighton and Mr. Alfred Gilbert were keenly interested in making the British contribution a success, and heartily welcomed the assistance which Goulding offered. He expressed his readiness to send the necessary crayons and transfer papers to any number of artists, and to make himself responsible for the printing. Leighton and Gilbert were enthusiastic about the first results obtained; and by correspondence and personal appeal induced a number of distinguished artists to make experimental drawings. Among those who responded were J. S. Sargent, E. A. Abbey, Solomon J. Solomon, L. Alma Tadema, J. D. Linton, M. Ridley Corbet, A. Parsons, F. Dicksee, W. Goscombe John, and Phil May. Goulding also invited the assistance of his own friends, and especially some well-known etchers, among them being Frank Short, C. J. Watson, A. Hartley, A. H. Haig, H. Dicksee, Oliver Hall, Miss Bolingbroke, and Miss C. M. Pott. Some remarkable results were obtained, and the lithographs, after being exhibited in Paris, were shewn in November, 1895, by Mr.

Dunthorne, at the Rembrandt Gallery in Vigo Street. A very limited number of proofs was taken, and the stones were destroyed. A set of 76 signed proofs of these lithographs was presented by Goulding, in 1906, to the Victoria and Albert Museum, where they may now be seen in the department of engraving, illustration, and design." Mr. Hardie goes on to say: "Goulding's experience of plate printing enabled him to get the best result obtainable from the stone; but it is only right to add that his consummate skill as a printer led him, with the stone, as with the plate, to improve sometimes upon an artist's work, and to obtain, or attempt to obtain, effects which were scarcely legitimate.

"Mr. Ridley Corbet, for instance, complained: 'Then you have been experimenting in two tints, which is very seldom satisfactory, and wiping out the high lights in a most casual way.'" But it is "A well-known Academician," Mr. Hardie, I regret to say, does not name him, who, on receiving proofs of his transfer-lithographs, wrote: "Being an artist yourself, you have immensely improved the effect with your manipulation, and for my part I would very gladly acknowledge this. Certainly the taste and good craftsmanship of F. G. are welcome; but what I feel on general grounds—please don't be very angry—is this: Is the reliance on tasteful printing likely to tend to advance lithography? When any raw hand (like myself) may have his work made into a picture, would not the advance lie in the direction of some fellow trying how much he could get out of a stone? Suppose a genius had some kind of magic varnish, that, placed on indifferent pictures, would make them right. He would help the artist out of his difficulties, but would it tend to the advancement of painting?"

And it was on the strength, chiefly, of proofs from such experimental drawings on transfer paper that an article was actually written on Whistler as "The Master of the Lithograph." Such flowers of fulsome "niceness" can only be arrived at by ignoring the following plain considerations. An art can only flourish when commercial conditions are such that it is in constant demand, and being practised by numbers of artists as a bread-winning occupation. When lithography was alive, it was that it was being practised by countless artists, good, bad, and indifferent. As Mr. Hammerstein said the other day, "From the chorus springs the superior talent." When the lithographic language was current, a Gavarni, a Daumier, or a Raffet were using the

vulgar tongue; only with more wit and more grace than the others. Lithographic chalk yields its secrets only to a lifetime of practice; and a lifetime of practice, such is our sluggish human nature, will only be undertaken when hunger is the spur. The art was a live one when lithography was the cheapest method for the multiplication of autographic drawings in the Press. Nor was it revived in 1895 because Lord Leighton and Mr. Alfred Gilbert were interested in making the British contribution to the centennial exhibition in Paris a success!

The art of etching has always been on an entirely different footing. Now, as in the time of Hollar, the etcher is concerned with strictly limited multiplication of his idea, so that, in etching, there has been no change in the predisposing commercial conditions, as there has been in the history of lithography.

The invention of steel-facing plates introduced a change in degree, not in kind. Into an estimate of the commercial value of any one of the limited number of proofs that the copperplate will yield, enter not only considerations of art but of rarity; so that an art collector with the well-formed head of a connoisseur may tail off, like the syren, in a mere philatelist. I was amused to note the other day at Christie's, amused or grieved, I forget which, that, while a drawing by Charles Keene fetched a matter of £3, a print from a drawing on a copper plate, which was certainly not as good a drawing as the Keene, and certainly not, like the Keene, unique, fetched some hundreds.

I am proud to say that I once succeeded in bringing a smile to the somewhat difficult lips of Mr. Augustus John by a description of the difference in the exclamations of the spectator when drawings or etchings are shown. To a drawing he will say "Oh!" in a tone that means "I suppose so," if not, "What of it?" or as the French say, "Et puis après?" To an etching he will exclaim, "O-o-o-o-h!" as much as to say, "Now you're talking!"

It is this state of things that has led, and will always lead, to the creation of etchers *ad hoc*. Dealers will say, "Business in Whistler's proofs must needs come to an end soon, and *etchers we must have*. Unique proofs of precious states must be manufactured over the well-known initials T. D. and H., and a guinea or two more charged if Tom, Dick and Harry can be prevailed upon to add 'imp.' to their names in the margin." So etchers are created *ad hoc*, whether their

drawings are interesting, and call for multiplication, or not. The public have been educated to expect that an etching should, if possible, contain a mast or two; or, if not, there should be a line of mud at low tide, with a leaning post and a high horizon; or a little shop is expected with a toddling child standing beside it, facing the spectator.

All these things are the last ripples of a dying back-wash. The etchers of the rising generation have their eyes fixed on quite other and nobler traditions. First and foremost they recognise that, if they are to become strong, they must have their plates printed like visiting cards. They will take gratefully from Hook the motto: "Lose your line and you lose your light." They will disdain entirely to rely on dirt left on the plate by a skilful printer, on what A. H. Palmer calls "semi-vicarious etching." They will do it all themselves on the plate, to the best of their ability, like Vandyke or Karel du Jardin. Instead of confining themselves to faint imitation of the purely personal traits of Rembrandt's talent, it is not improbable that they will consent to accept as their ideal Karel du Jardin's plate of 1652.

It represents a cavalier reining up on the battlefield to glance at a corpse that lies stripped and hacked by the side of a dead servant, and the carcase of a charger, while a troop with spears and pennants is galloping away into the distance. Technically, this plate, of which there is no proof in the British Museum, is perhaps *the* etching of the world. It is impossible for clarity, concision and vivacity to go further. For the sake of his drama, the artist knew that it was necessary to throw the mass formed by the carcase of the charger, the bank, and the receding troop into penumbra. A baser modern would have left that mass flimsy and empty, and called it atmosphere, or downed it with dirt. Not so the master. He achieves the result of keeping the protagonists in the limelight by crowding the second plane with eloquent drawing, so that it is what the French call "dru," or "thick" (as applied to hair or grass or watercress). Enlarged photographs of the naked corpse should be in every art school as a standard of drawing from the nude. As in Vandyke, the approaches of the shadows are felt with a sensitive stipple that gives way, at the definite transition into shadow, to expressive line work. Nothing has been left to the printer. The plate could safely have been sent to Parkins and Gotto to prove.

There are two distinct and different intentions with which a man may set about to etch. He will do well to follow either or both at different times, but it must be at different times. There is, firstly, the draught from nature, made, as it were, at white heat with a current reed. Of this, Whistler's "Rialto" or his "Long Lagoon" (in drypoint) may be taken as the type. And, secondly, there is the deliberately built-up composition, which relies on an accumulation of studies, on memory, or on spontaneous invention. Of this we may take Claude's *Bouvier* as the type.

The greater masters have spent their lives in the pursuit and culture of the second of these intentions, and have constantly achieved the former as a by-product. It is the etcher of the "Death of the Virgin," who is able to give us, in half an hour and fifty strokes, a couple of willows and ten miles of plain. Where, on the other hand, in such plates as "The Doorway" or "The Garden," Whistler has tried to enrich his original inspired sketch from nature, with afterthoughts of tone and attempted amplifications of figures, the freshness and homogeneity of the sketchy execution has been lost, and the additions are irrelevant and nerveless. It is quite certain that the brilliant success of plates on the lines of "The Bridge" and "The Rialto" more than justifies as many misses on copper as are necessary to produce the tiny percentage of hits. The trouble with the dissipating method is that the dissipation tends to grow. Inspiration becomes more and more fissiparous. Whistler's drawing certainly petered out through the later plates and transfer lithographs into very small change indeed, while the constructive etchers have grown from strength to strength.

The rising generation of students knows very well that the drawing of landscapes or inanimate objects, by artists who are not accomplished draftsmen of the figure, must always remain on an inferior plane. A paling or a post is drawn quite differently by a man who can draw the figure, than by one who is obliged to limit his representations to posts and palings. It cannot too often be remembered that Turner was an accomplished draftsman and painter of the figure. His portrait as a young man was sufficient to prove it, if we had not as well the magnificent *dramatis personæ* in the picture of "Calais Harbour." His figure drawing is not merely correct: it is vividly and eloquently dramatic and expressive. Look at the parallel sturdy backs of the two fishermen in nightcaps, retaining a perpendicular

seat while their boat is at an angle of 45 degrees; at the lady in the thin white empire dress that the wind is moulding to her plump figure; at the officer in the cocked hat; and at the old sailor furiously gesticulating in the Frenchest of French gestures his request, made inaudible by the wind, for the filling of the bottle he has got on board, with Calvados or *fil à quatre*.

I am glad to see that Mr. Holmes, in his "Notes on the Art of Rembrandt," seems to suggest that draftsmen intending to devote themselves to architectural subjects should undergo a course of training in an architect's office.

Experience shows, as reasoning might have anticipated, that the Art School practice of making drawings on a scale dictated by the size of the manufacturer's paper, rather than by the laws of optics, leads to nothing but emptiness, feebleness, lifelessness and, above all, evasion in drawing. The natural and normal communication between eye and hand is thereby broken, and drawing, losing its instinctive objectivity, comparison of forms is no longer direct but proportional. Enormous complication is introduced into an act that should be developed till it becomes almost a natural function.

I wish I had time to conduct an investigation in search of the origin of this pestilential Art School method. It must have arisen, I imagine, in Paris in the first place, from a confusion of the functions of study and cartoon—things which all executants know must be kept severely separate. I imagine that an analogy might be found between this error and certain forms of cramming. It was, I suppose, conceived that the education of the student would be served best by putting him in a posture *immediately* to exhibit life-sized portraits, and to get *immediate* commissions for them. The point at issue between me, and the system I am condemning is much the same as that which perennially divides pious donors from professors of universities, as to whether teaching is to be on the school or the university grade. As in their quarrel, so in mine, is it not possible that both the professors and I may be in the right, even from the utilitarian point of view, and our opponents short-sighted? It is true, the earnings of the painter of life-sized parade portraits are enormous, but since there are seldom more than one or two vacancies for these posts, it seems useless to train a whole generation to compete for them. I said one or two vacancies —let us add one or two more for cheaper understudies.

The field for illustration on the other hand is unlimited. Demand in this direction can be created by anyone with invention. More skilful draftsmen are needed for competent drafts of architectural subjects than can be found, and the whole field of natural "genre" pictures, desolated by the error of scale introduced by competitive exhibitions, is waiting to be re-tilled on the lines, say, of Hogarth, of Wilkie, of Longhi.

Graceful and delicate draftsmanship of natural scenes, contemporary or historical, will never tire. An interesting supply will soon create a demand, especially if the painters or draftsmen are willing to work for a wage which compares reasonably with that of other laborious and unpretentious professions.

The conspiracy of semi-unconscious "spoof," which is looked upon by some as an alarming symptom of the artistic health of the present day, is in reality a very small and unimportant manifestation. In the story of the "Emperor's New Clothes," it was the whole nation that affected not to see that his Majesty was naked. The modern cult of post-impressionism is localised mainly in the pockets of one or two dealers holding large remainders of incompetent work. They have conceived the genial idea that if the values of criticism could only be reversed—if efficiency could be considered a fault, and incompetence alone sublime—a roaring and easy trade could be driven. Sweating would certainly become easier with a post-impressionist *personnel* than with competent hands, since efficient artists are limited in number; whereas Piccassos and Matisses could be painted by all the coachmen that the rise of the motor traffic has thrown out of employment. It is, after all, an extremely small circle of very unoccupied ladies who find amusement and excitement in going one better than the other in ecstasy at the incomprehensible.

Students will still continue to struggle with the pedestrian difficulties of objective drawing, and to register with satisfaction the minute degrees of increase in power and in insight which is all that human effort may expect to accomplish. When they turn, in their daily paper, to accounts of what is being done by workers in other fields, they will find recorded, as a mattter of course, such statements as the following:—

"Heydweiller, of Berlin, in repeated experiments, found discrepancies

ranging from the two thousand five-hundredth part of a grain. Landot therefore began again, and spent five years over his investigations."

Read by the side of this paragraph the adventures experienced by the souls of Mr. Lewis Hind and Mr. Berenson, in their voyage through masterpieces of nonsense, seem to be lacking in interest, and even in actuality.

We Come Down to a Shilling

THE ablest editor in London gives most exquisite dinner parties, and when, with the progress of the port, he invited me with a genial nod to "come over" and sit beside him, I realised, as I threw my napkin under the chair, that I would have to make a clean breast of it. I pinched my corona y corona first, and then, in response to that pleasant smile which draws some millions of halfpennies per day in newspaper circulation, I let the secret out boldly: "We are coming down to a shilling."

The port went slowly round the table and the fine old brandy went round, and all the cigars were glowing red before my magnificent host gave any sign that he had heard, but at last he turned round sharply upon me and chuckled.

"So you're out for coin?" he said.

"Not of this realm," I replied. "We are out for a principle."

For a couple of minutes my friend eyed me curiously, as were I the Okapi, and then somewhat thoughtfully, it seemed to me, he said this:

"There's not much money in principles."

"I never said there was."

The riposte hit him again. He was thinking hard, I could see. He leaned back in his armchair and stared.

"Then what in the name of journalistic common-sense are you starting out at a bob for?" he said.

"To succeed," I returned laconically.

Not many men pierce the dialectical defence of the ablest editor in London, and my answer apparently distressed him, for, placing a hand kindly on my arm, he leant forward and said,

"You've got nerves, dear boy. You'd better take up golf."

"I'm about fifteen," I returned.

My friend now sat back and studied me carefully. For a moment I thought he was going to call in the police, but he merely smiled. And, pouring himself out another glass of brandy, he called out to a big ruddy-faced man sitting

higher up the table, "Dan! come over here. I say, you know what the public wants better than anyone in the country. Tell me, can the *English Review* live at a shilling?"

"Six months, why not," Dan replied, promptly. "Start with a few stars, and that kind of thing. A surprise success and then—down. We've tried it. Eh? We know," and the ruddy-faced man laughed a fat laugh.

"Well," said our host, "you hear what Dan says. What have you to say now?"

"Dan is right," I said. "But you've forgotten. We are out for a principle."

"Not the critical attitude one, I hope," interposed my old friend Sparkes, who writes dramatic criticisms for three newspapers and political leaders when the theatres allow him.

"No," I meekly rejoined. "We have no attitude, or pose, or pretension. We are just going to see whether the British public will not put down a shilling for a review which has the quality of a two-and-sixpenny one."

"There's a lot of competition in Covent Garden Market," said Dan slyly.

"I know, but a good pear is always a good pear. It's the sleepy ones that spoil the box."

My host smiled. Dan sucked his cigar. Sparkes imitated them both.

The old brandy was awfully good. I helped myself to another glass.

"Look here," I said. "People won't pay half-a-crown to-day. But they will pay a shilling. Don't you think?"

"They will," said my host, sententiously, "for the right article."

"Well," I ventured, "we've got the goods."

The remark impressed mine host.

"Welby," he called out again, "take a seat over here, there's some fun in this corner."

I looked at Welby closely, he was so remarkably young and handsome.

"Welby," said our host, "what chance has the *English Review* at a shilling."

Welby looked outrageously wise and Apollonian as he meditated upon the question, and his voice was pleasant too.

"Difficult question," he answered at length. "Depends so much on the stuff."

Our host beamed approvingly on the lad.

"A wise head. You have'nt told us what stuff you propose to offer?" he remarked, turning towards me.

"I thought you knew," I said. "Exactly the same thing—same quantity, same quality, same standard, poetry and all. The only difference will be in the price."

The four men interchanged rapid mental notes.

"Honest Injun!" said Dan.

"Absolutely. Necessarily, if you come to think of it. It's our only chance."

The four men spoke simultaneously.

"But you can't offer a *half-crown review for a shilling!*"

"Why not?"

Again the answer came to me in a chorus.

"Because it can't pay."

"You forget the principle," I objected.

"What principle," said Welby.

"Phosphorus," I retorted.

"Brain-work, Eh? Ah! there's a small half-a-crown brain public, but there's a d—— . . ."

"A twenty thousand *shilling* brain public," I threw in, whereat my friends laughed so loudly that the three other guests, who were discussing Insurance relief, stopped their conversation and drew their chairs round mine host, who was enjoying himself hugely.

"We must hear it," said a tall, thin man I did not know.

"You shall," said our host. "Here's the proposition, Squire. What chance has the *English Review* at a shilling?"

Squire was evidently a business man.

"As it is," he said, "or . . . ?"

"As it is."

"Poetry?"

"The best obtainable."

"Free Trade?"

I nodded.

"Same unconventional policy?"

Again I nodded.

"No matter if a man is popular or unpopular, you'll publish the stuff, if it's the big stuff?"

"The big stuff, yes. Always," I replied.

"No pandering to commercialism?"

I shook my head.

"No skimping of articles, doctoring, diluting?"

"No."

"You'll really give the public the half-crown matter of the *English Review* at a bob?"

"I will," and I felt as if I was being married.

"No stodge?"

"No."

"No putting in names or titles merely because they are titles?"

"No."

"Fearless criticism?"

"So far as is humanly possible."

"Without stint or bias?"

"Quite so."

"Oh, one more question. You'll still publish the work of quite unknown talent?"

"It will be one of our chief endeavours."

Squire paused and took off his pince-nez spectacles. He wiped them slowly with a silk handkerchief, replaced them and looked me kindly in the face.

"You've a good sporting chance, I think," he observed.

In the silence that ensued upon these words I held out my hand.

"I think," I said, "you come from America."

"I do," returned Mr. Squire. "And I say, go right ahead. It's the best way always."

"Sure," I returned. "It's the great lesson you've taught the world. I'm going to follow your advice."

We shook hands cordially, and Dan looked so surprised that he dropped his cigar-ash down his waistcoat.

"Do you know," said our host, "there may be something in your scheme. I had no idea you were really going to maintain your present standard. I thought . . ."

"To drop the standard would be fatal," I interposed.

"Look at the success of 'Everyman's Library'! Do you realise the vast cultured public there is in the Midlands and in the North, in Scotland, in Wales?"

"That's true," said Welby. "I sounded them last summer."

"It's not in the drawing-rooms that men read to-day," I continued. "It's the new board school generation that reads books and poets, and sound literary work. You must remember that London no longer gives the lead in things literary. Manchester, Birmingham, Nottingham, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh—that's where men read books. We have a miner who subscribes even at half-a-crown on our

books. We are not speculating on the so-called classes at all. They are far too busy, what with business, motors, London life and politics, to sit down and read. But there is a big, thoughtful and cultured public that has never been to Oxford or Cambridge, who cannot afford more than a shilling a month yet who need the intellectual pabulum that hitherto has only been provided at half-a-crown. These are the people who have asked us to provide a literary Review at a reasonable figure. It is part of the democratic idea, too. We intend to cater for them."

"You think," said Sparkes, "that there are twenty thousand people in Great Britain who will pay a shilling for literature!"

"It's a small percentage out of our forty-five literate millions," I returned. "I maintain that there are quite twenty thousand people in this island who will read an adult organ."

"You may be right," said mine host, gravely. "I hope you are. But it is an experiment."

"I venture to think it is a want," I replied.

"Well, but look at the theatre," Sparkes threw in cynically.

"True, but you will have noticed what is going on outside London, the Celtic theatrical revival, the admirable Glasgow repertory, the Manchester theatre; Synge and the Irish players were a revelation to jaded London which visits the playhouse for entertainment. Yet look at 'Fanny's First Play!' Look at London's joy at the beauty of the Russian dancers! You see, it is not all musical comedy rag. Then see how admirable some of the turns at the halls now are, artistically!"

"What about advertisers?" said mine host, who always has an eye to business.

"We have found them generous enough, even at half-a-crown," I said. "They are very 'cute people. If they think we touch the right public, they'll 'come in' right enough."

"And the libraries!" and Welby smiled archly.

"I don't think they'll hurt us. If people think we are worth reading, they will want to have us to keep in the home—a poem perhaps, an essay, a story, a series of articles, and at a shilling they will be able to, at least I think so, just as they buy 'Everyman's Library.' People demur at half-a-crown; for a shilling we are cheap enough. We have had numbers of letters from schoolmasters, curates,

clerks, working-men all over the country about this question, and they all say, 'Make it a shilling, and we'll buy it because we want it.'"

"You'll have to get a Scotch sub-editor," said mine host.

"Why?" I enquired meekly.

"To keep you from getting into trouble," he returned, smiling benevolently. "At a shilling you'll find how limited the area of discussion is in this—ahem!—free country. I believe you're a limited company now. Well, if you don't get a Scotch sub-editor, you'll find your liabilities will . . ."

"Oh, I don't think so," I interrupted him. "We will stand for courageous expression for sure, but we will never pander to vulgarity."

"I don't mean that," said mine host. "What I mean is that you may be too expressive, and tread on people's toes. There are an extraordinary lot of susceptibilities in England, you know, and you'll have to respect them."

"You over-estimate them," I ventured. "The essential thing is sincerity. If people find we are sincere and that the work is good, they will respect us too. People are very good to us now. I don't anticipate trouble. Honest opposition, rivalry, will be welcome."

"What about Scotland!" said Dan.

"Oh, the Scots are all right. They read us now—in the libraries. At a shilling they'll read us at home."

"And the Welsh?"

"Artists," I rejoined. "They read the big stuff, and they know it, too, when it comes along. Besides . . ."

"Well!"

"Why do you ask? We are not out to shock men."

"Oh, I know," said Dan, "but . . ."

"Our policy is perfectly honest, clean, healthy."

"Of course," said mine host. "*We* know that. But there are odd people about in the land of individualism, you know, many faddists, cranks, so-called reformers, troglodytes. That is why I said get a Scotch sub-editor. He's a good pilot through the shoals of cant. He'll see you through."

I made no answer to this, and we sat and looked at one another.

Mine host raised his glass and drank my health.

"Wish you luck," he said. "I believe you're doing the right thing. Shall we? . . ." He rose.

"Do you know," I said, grabbing some liquorice

chocolates, which I intended to share with someone upstairs, "I believe at a shilling the ladies will join us."

Bonne année!

AUSTIN HARRISON.

It was with the deepest sorrow that we heard of the death of Richard Middleton at Brussels, at the age of twenty-eight. Those who love poetry can partly estimate the greatness of the loss to English letters: he was a singer with new music and a new message. Readers of the *English Review* will remember that we recently published some stories of boyhood from his pen, which were of singular charm and interest. He wrote prose with distinction. As a critic of literary work he showed unerring judgment. We have lost a friend and delightful companion. Middleton was a brave sincere and gentle spirit, who had a poet's contempt for the world's opinion and the material prizes of life, the memory of whom we will hold ever living and dear.

The Puritan and the Theatre

By Haldane Macfall

The world is astir with a profound sense of impending change.

Everywhere is a mighty craving for something more satisfying than the mere greed for wealth. The churches ring with denunciations; but in vain. The established churches of necessity, for existence, become the props and pillars of the old order. It is always the outcast churches —the protesters, the sneered-at non-conformists—that strike for the larger freedom. Yet—and there is the bitter irony of it—it is precisely this body of men who look with alarmed eyes upon the mightiest sword of freedom, the Arts. It is by the arts above all that a people have revealed to them their widest destiny and their most lofty Emprise.

For no man may reach to the Splendid Wayfaring of life, or indeed know of Life beyond an idiot's conception, without Art. Art is the majestic road by which every sane man must travel towards the immensities.

Nothing, then, is more important than to grasp the significance of Art; yet to your man in the street the word has been made to stand for a boredom, tattered into falsities by the academic and the pedant and the prig. It is vital therefore to define Art.

Whatsoever a man's religion or code of life may be—or lack of code—his supreme desire is to live. He will make the vastest sacrifices—to live. Joy and Happiness lead to the fulfilment; Pain turns us from transgression against it. The burnt child avoids the fire. All is sacrilege that mishandles the wondrous miracle.

The most vastly interesting thing to man is Life.

It is his feverish search during his little span, from birth to death, to discover its significance; it is his hope beyond the grave—eternal life.

Now, there are only two paths by which we may arrive at this wonderful and miraculous thing. Either *we must each of us live the whole of the adventure of life ourselves;*

or we can *experience life at second-hand through the communion to us of their adventures by our fellow men.*

Every man, of course, must be born, grow to manhood, know hunger and thirst, love, and die. But it is abundantly clear that the thoughts, the emotions, feelings, sensations of life of any single being, even if he be one of the greatest of the great, cannot but be child's play when set beside the vast experiences and perceptions of the lives of all his fellows. Our personal adventures and experiences, though one bestride the world like a Napoleon, can at best be but a small and parochial affair, when all's said, as against the multitudinous experience of our generation. Shut off from communion with our fellows, we walk little better than a blind man wandering in a desert place.

Fortunately it has been granted to us to experience life through the communion of our fellows. In that, at once, we stand arrayed in splendour, supreme above the brutes. It is thereby that we have gained lordship over all created things.

Now we can know of life at second-hand from our fellows by the communion of their *Thoughts* to us; and become partakers of their feelings by their communion to us of their *sensations.*

But it is not enough to *speak* of Life in order to experience it—that is an affair of the intellect alone. Before we can experience life we must feel it—sense it. We must know life as a sensation, experience it emotionally.

And just as the *thoughts* of others can only become our thoughts when we can be made to understand them—that is to say through the communication of speech: so the *sensations* of others can only be communicated to us when they make us feel through our senses what they have felt—either by so skilful a use of colours that they arouse through our sight the vision that their eyes have beheld by the craftsmanship of painting; or through our hearing by the subtle employment of sounds so that we are made to feel what they have felt through the craftsmanship of music; or by the conjuring upon our emotions so as to make us feel what they have felt through the cunning craftsmanship of words as in Oratory or Prose or Verse or the Drama or the like; so that we actually experience their sensations as though we ourselves had lived them; thus the whole gamut of joy or sorrow, anger or pity, awe or laughter, heroism or cowardice, may be brought into our existence. This power of being able to

transfer to us their sensations by a skilful playing upon our senses is Art.

The province of Art, then, is the whole wide realm of the Imagination; it is born in the Imagination; rooted in the Imagination; grows in the Imagination; and blossoms and bears fruit in the Imagination—aroused through the senses.

The music pipes up a dancing measure—trips it in merry fashion, gay, blithe—immediately the sun shines in our hearts. But to the stately tramp of the mourners of Death, the music steadies to more solemn and majestic cadence—at once the shadow of sorrow stalks in the land. A rollicking lilt upon the barrel-organ sets all the children's feet a-jigging down the alley.

Speech is our intellectual means of communion with our fellows. *Art is our emotional means of communion with our fellows.*

Art is not an oil-painting on canvas in a gilt frame. Art is not the exclusive toy of a few prigs—nor the password of a cult. Art is universal, eternal—not parochial. Every man is an artist in his degree—every man is moved by Art in his degree. For one act of our day to which we are moved by calculated Reason, we are moved to a score by the emotions, by instinct, by our senses—by the thing felt.

Every child is an artist. When a child essays to explain an experience or a mood, that child by instinct almost invariably utters that experience or sensation in such terms as to make us feel what it has felt. It at once becomes an artist thereby. A child is not content to commune with us through its thoughts, that is to say by a logical statement; it endeavours to employ words in such a fashion, so to turn words about, as to make us feel what it has felt—it employs Art.

Around the camp-fire rough men gather and tell tales. They are artists—greater or less according to their skill of craftsmanship. In camp or quarter, in palace or cottage, in mansion or hovel, in church or pot-house, joy bursts into song, or sorrow into refrain; the limner with wondrous hand's skill, tells what his eyes have seen, the singer utters what his ears have heard or that for which his soul has yearned; the hand of the sculptor moulds the clay into shapes that are symbols of the emotions evoked by forms; the painter catches the mood of the twilight or the freshness of the dawn or the jocund sense of the blithe day—they are all artists, in their degree of skill as craftsmen.

Art, then, so far from being a mere dandified luxury for the rich, or for the entertainment of the prig, is an absolute hunger of every intelligent being.

Art, so far from being the little exclusive preciosity that the so-called artistic coteries pride themselves alone on understanding, is far removed from that preciosity—and whilst these very coteries are hugging themselves on possessing it, they are generally embracing a dead thing or a sham, whilst the very people whom they affect to despise are partakers in the Reality.

If you would realise what your life would be without the means to commune with your fellow men so as to be partakers in their sensations and emotions, try to think of a man in that awful solitude that is never broken by contact with any other human soul ; and you can scarcely exaggerate what a man's punishment would be without the arts. He who is without Art lives in a blind man's parish ; nay, worse, walks in the fantastic isolation of the kingdom of the mad, little higher than the beasts.

Art is the splendid garden of man's imagination, the wayfaring by which he reaches to the majestic realm of his fullest experience, the wide highway whereby he steps from his petty egoism into the vast communion with his fellow men, inherits the ages, and reaches out to his fulfilment. Art is a garden wherein blossoms the richest and the largest knowledge of life, wherein man may find a harvest for the reaping, abundance for the gathering. Without Art he lives in the sordid garret of a paltry loneliness with his own petty soul. He has but to step into the garden of Art to walk with the giants ; hold communion with the saints, know the exquisite ecstasies of life, thrill with the splendour of the noblest passions, enlarge his heart and brain with the fellowship of such as have trod the vastnesses and suffered with the broken, known pity and triumph, been purified by compassion and strutted it to stately heroic impulses. There is no sensation that he may not experience, and, experiencing, live, if he shall wander into the Splendid Wayfaring.

For, to such as walk in the garden of the Arts, the eye may see, the hearing thrill to, the senses be excited by the sublime emotions that others have felt and recorded with the wizardy of their artistry—through the wide gamut of the emotions, from the vastest and most dramatic to the subtlest and the most exquisite impressions. To such the twilight will yield its sweet-sad glamour, played into the senses by

the art of Watteau, of Corot, or the skill of the tense verse of *An Elegy in a Country Church Yard*. To such the art of Shakespeare, by skilled magic of words, yields the wide and sonorous sensations of a prodigious experience of the soul—an astounding range of emotions, from the exquisite pain of the love-lyric to the heroic impulse of war, and the large and majestic moods that make men near to gods, whether they face the tragic sublimities or climb the firmament to highest ambitions.

Seated before a book in narrow garret, lighted by flame of solitary candle, with the art of such as Shakespeare made, 'tis given to us, yielding ourselves to the wizardy of his astounding skill in weaving words, thereby to experience emotions that the richest cannot more fully know. With the marvellous instinct that unlocked to him the music that is in words, he wrought the phrase's significance into impressions that move us in strange and compelling fashion.

What science shall unknot the skill that makes the words take on their large and rounded forms? or move us into the mood whereby we answer with our senses to their majestic utterance? At a trice, the measure of the phrasing changes, by the alchemy of his craftsmanship; he utters the rippling mood of laughter, and sets merriment jigging through our blood. A stately mood, and at once we are moving in more stately measure. The words drag in love-lorn ecstasy of man for maid, of maid for man, and we are held by the strange and haunting perplexities that the world calls love. Again the measure of the words changes, and the agonies of life, or the fears of awesome dread take possession of us. Such things no laws can weave, no academies teach. The means escape us. We know that Art has been created, for we are conquered—become partakers in the revelation of life through the skill of another who has yielded into our experience a new sense that had otherwise been denied us. We arise changed and ennobled and enlarged. From such art we are fed with nobility, and a great humanity enters into our souls.

Reason has done harm as well as good for life. By losing the relation of the intellect to the emotions, by placing intellect above the emotions, the world has come near to looking upon the strangling of life as a splendid discipline—the which it is not. All noble things used to excess, all great qualities debauched, become a deadly evil. The gulf

between Licence and Liberty is even wider than the gulf between lack of Liberty and the inhumanities.

Human nature is by instinct noble—its instincts are ever towards the heights. If you shall make a man subject to others, by the odd whimsy of our destiny you make a weak vessel. If you give man freedom to develop his full faculties you make one of the Masterfolk. Ring the Human round about with denials, and you create the Abject, the Fearful, the Hypocrite, the Base of Will. Give the Human his Freedom, and he soon realises that he cannot be Free except by Splendid Self-discipline. The man who is not naughty for fear of the opinions of his fellows is naughty at heart and naughty in act his life long—his career is one long screening of his naughtinesses.

Of a truth, if you shall be dullard enough to accept the grey blasphemy that man is born a liar and a scoundrel and a miserable sinner, it were well ever to obey the law Thou Shalt Not. But of such are not the master spirits. Man happens to be born with eyes for the stars, feet to climb to the heights—his passions and his emotions and instincts guide him to honour himself, to respect himself, to abhor tyranny, to hate cruelty, to be angered by injustice, to seek healthy ways and virile habits. The Giver of Life made man to enjoy and employ his functions, or wherefore gave He them to us ? Man was not born for a monk's cell, nor woman for a nunnery—or we perish.

The small-eye'd and the fearful speak ever of the great emotions, which become the Passions, as being the evil side of us. As a matter of vital importance in life, the Passions are the best in us. It is the noble passions that lead us forward, impel us to life. And he is a born criminal whose baser passions overwhelm his nobler passions.

Make no mistake about it : all the moral codes, all the dry philosophic jargon of Reason, all the appeals to the *law* are as nothing in a man's life set beside his emotions increased to such an overwhelming tenseness that they become passion—it is the strife of his nobler passions in conflict with his lower that creates his conscience and, moving him to action, creates the wider experience of his soul.

There has been no great advance in the life of man except that which has been wrought by the noble passions—acts done in the thrill of the heroic fever born of the heroic essence. And vast charity and generosity and love of fellow men are the greatest of these.

The Reason is the guide of the Intellect to knowledge; but knowledge and the affairs of the intellect are sterile unless they be wedded to the emotions.

It is not by his Thou Shalt Nots but by his Thou Shalts that man reaches to the heights, walks the vast realm of life, knows Reality, and breathes Nobility.

Law is a necessity. The Law is founded in Thou Shalt Not. For there is need of Thou Shalt Not, that good order may prevail—that, by our acts, we shall not conflict with our fellows. But that is the sole virtue in the Law.

Law is sterile; it cannot create—it can but prevent. Its function is to prevent.

Life is a great Thou Shalt; and Thou Shalt alone fulfils Life.

There are those who set Art to the service of morality. But morality is not created by laws; you shall only guard against immorality by laws. Art is wholly free of morality or of immorality as its function; Art can create that which offends against morality or that which supports morality. And it is a grim and significant fact that the art which breathes the forward-moving revelation of life is generally attacked by the very people who preen themselves on being moralists: whilst these very moralists will, often as not without demur, accept the basest forms of art as "amusing."

Art can be base as well as noble. What is more, the craftsmanship of base art may be as perfect as the craftsmanship of noble art. This must never be lost sight of. But Art cannot make an ignoble subject noble. Beauty may be a very prostitute. The art of pleasing may be the pander to unutterable shame. Amusement may give forth shrill laughter to the most ignoble ticklings of the senses. But noble art ennobles; base art debases.

Liberty is an essential to the creation of Art. Yet every vulgarian is out against the liberty and right of Art!

The "Respectable" are they who are afraid of life. Being mediocre, they naturally worship mediocrity. Being fearful, they batten on fear.

When a people are given Liberty, it is a strange truth that by their very liberty they are cleansed. It would seem a logical danger that the more liberty a people are given, the more dangerous a weapon of misuse is put into their hands; yet it is human experience that, on the contrary, the dignity that ensues to a free people brings a more stately concept of life, a larger tolerance, a wider charity, that kill the danger. For man is by instinct noble.

Art concerns solely the artist and his race; a people who permit any body of vulgarians to come between them and the artist are unfit for great art or a great destiny.

There is scarce a great artist who would not be condemned for immorality by some one. The Bible contains chapters that are loathsome to the most hardened palate—yet they are rightly loathsome for they were so intended by the great artists who wrote them. And he would stand a convicted fool who banished the Bible because of them.

The artist must be of the breed of the conquerors. He has to discover a new world. As must all who would reach to majesty and dominion, he has to break the ancient table of the laws.

The new revelation, which leads to man's forward-moving, must ever challenge current morality as well as all current and established things that stand in the way of forward-moving. And forward-moving ever looms blasphemous or anarchic to the mediocre. But the man who is stoned or starved or assailed as Anarchist to-day is like enough to be enshrined as demigod to-morrow.

The new revelation towards the heights is ever anarchic to the Hide-bound. The giver of the new law looms ever anarchic to the followers of the stale law; for he breaks the old law and shatters it. To the form-ridden Israelites, the mightiest of the Jews loomed anarchic: the Scribes and Pharisees assailed the Man of Sorrows as Anarchist, and crucified Him for it.

The artist must reveal life to the people. In so far as his art reveals a wider life to his fellows, in so far is he conqueror. By the measure of his failure to reveal life is the depth of his failure as artist. Keep at least the ark of Art from uncleanliness. For—and mark this well—'tis a lonely thing to be an artist.

The artist may have to live in isolation to utter his art. His dwelling-place, likely enough for years, may be the desert of neglect. His calling requires that awful and august solitude of misunderstanding during his best years, even amidst the roar of the traffic of his fellow men.

It is God's aristocracy who are crucified.

Is the drama of vast importance to the human achievement in its forward-moving to higher and wider and nobler destiny? Is the art of the Theatre an affair of vital significance to the life of the people? or is it merely an affair of *Amusement?* mere farce and tomfoolery, designed

to help by side-splitting comicalities in mitigating the boredom of our evenings? the measure of its success the gallons of our laughter?

Upon the answer the theatre depends.

The art of the drama is encumbered with this Old Man of the Sea—the widespread idea that the whole aim of the theatre is to amuse; just as the art of painting lies under the blight of the falsity that Art is Beauty.

If the aim and depth of the drama be simply to amuse, it would even then have a healthy and sufficient reason for support. Amusement is a legitimate and a humanising factor in life; but it is *not* its whole object, nor its greatest object. By consequence, whilst amusement has its proper and right place in Art, and a large place, it has not the greatest place.

He who has no gaiety in his heart is a curse here upon earth, and, let us sincerely hope, is damned hereafter: for, even if he stole into heaven, to such as he the blithe splendour of a handsome eternity would be as detestable as the gloomy hell that he would have his fellow-mortals to walk on earth, had he a hand in the ordering of things. Fortunately, the Glum Ones have not the intimate knowledge of God's will that they would usurp.

But Amusement is an affair of conditions. Some would guffaw to see an old lady fall down the stairs and her wig come off—some at the comicalities of facetious magistrates—some at street-urchins who pluck at a drunken woman's bonnet-strings. Indeed, when we arrive at laughter we are amongst the incongruities. What is laughter to one man may be tragedy to another.

No. The art of the theatre is not to amuse. It is far more profound and essential a need to a larger life.

Tragedy does not amuse.

There are deep emotions in the heart of man that are not rooted in laughter. The great temptations of life, the great passions, the sublime moods, pity, tears, self-sacrifice, the agonies, heroic aims, mighty endeavours, the majesty of things, the godhood that is in man, the weaknesses that are in him—these do not amuse. These do not arouse the hee-haw—except from asses.

No. The function of the theatre is not to amuse. It is built upon a surer foundation than the guffaw—wrought of more exquisite fabric than from the warp and woof of empty titterings.

THE PURITAN AND THE THEATRE

The mightiest dramas of the ages are not given to amusement.

The vices made alluring grow rich in their allure ; yet smug traffickers of the theatre grow rich upon it, and splutter with moral indignation when vice is shown to be a vulgar thing ! So quaint is the human !

The Puritan in us has come to paint certain failings of humanity blacker, out of all relation, than other and viler blacknesses, which it is smugly content to see as only grey. When your ordinary man, whether bishop or butcher or burglar, speaks of immorality, he nearly always means sex irregularity. Yet the irregularities of sex are, as often as not, the rebellions against the grave and unnatural laws that the Puritan has forced upon man and woman from commercial motives. Now the love of man and woman is one of the most compelling needs of being, one of the most potent instincts, one of the sanest and noblest incentives to life The love of man and woman, when it goes astray from the crude ordering of men's laws, is often the most forgivable of all strayings. The law and its penalties cannot make or unmake love ; but it can, and does often, bind together in the hellish sin of a loveless marriage a man and woman who loathe each other ; and this awful state is compelled upon them by their fellow Puritans, who are at the very time living upon the usury so bitterly condemned by their Christ, to say nothing of their guilt in vile acts of tyranny and swindling and lying and thieving, base treacheries in friendship and commerce, and a hundred and one uncharitable and mean acts, even whilst they beat their breasts and thank God that they are moral, whereby, when all's said, they only too often mean that they love no woman over well ! The Puritan in us is apt to forget that whilst we acclaim ourselves Christians, the Founder of our laws was gentle to the sinning woman, but lashed with anger the traffickers in that usury which is the foundation of our commerce to-day !

The Puritanical prejudice against all the arts is dying out as to most of them, but is still violent against the theatre. Now this Puritanism cannot be ridden down rough-shod ; it is at the base of much that is vital to the race—for it is crude exaggeration of the great factor created by liberty and essential to the Free—which, in its virile essence, is Self-discipline. Nor is this Puritanical bias as serious as it might be, since Puritanism has the desire to be intelligent, a fierce inquisition to understand—indeed, its fault is that

Puritanism separates the intellect from the emotions, and places it above them. But, mark you, for one act of our day that we do owing to the guidance of the intellect, we do a score upon our instincts and our emotions. A great emotion will always ride down a great intellect. The soul of a man has its home in his heart, not in his head. 'Tis the emotional appeal that thrills and rouses to action ; the mere reason leaves action cold. Nay, when a man lays down the years that have been leased to him out of the vastness of things, he will surely be accounted a man not by what he has not done, but by what he has done—not by what he has thought or intended, but by what he has endeavoured—not by the laws of life that he has not broken, but by the life that he has achieved—by the life that he has lived, not by the life that he has shirked.

But being intelligent, the Puritan has only to be convinced of the value and necessity of art in order to seek it. The Puritan has always looked upon the arts with suspicion, because he has wholly misunderstood their function and their significance—whether Jew or Gentile, Anglican or Catholic, Nonconformist or Agnostic, Mahomedan or Goth. Yet the Puritan has by very necessity fed upon the arts unwittingly, otherwise he had starved, body and soul. He has taken literature to himself ; nay, from the very pulpit is quoted the deep wisdom that Shakespeare uttered from the abhorred stage of the theatre ; and from the reading-desk is given forth the sublime fiction of the parables of the Man of Sorrows.

In simple truth, Puritanism not only cannot destroy the arts, but must have walked the madhouse or the desert without their aid. Yet Puritanism, in its enmity to the arts, would fling them to the corrupt and the vile.

Now the Puritan here spoken of is not the Stiggins and the caricatured Kill-joy, but is produced by every religious movement—the Jews bred him ; the Mahomedans ; the mediæval Church ; the Reformation ; the Agnostic ; the Atheist, every religious movement has bred him—and breeds him.

I speak not of the man who goes about crying out that the world is a botchy, ill-constructed affair, and that he would have arranged it better himself, but of the Puritan that lurks in us all—kin to the Puritan that, when kept within bounds, saves us from falling into excesses and debauching life. The healthy Puritan in our blood has taught us to

discipline our powers and to curb our senses ; but the unhealthy Puritan commits the excesses of denials even as he calls for punishment of excesses in passion.

The moment that the Puritan in us overbalances the humanities—the moment that we indulge the Puritan in us to excess and allow it to make us into ascetics and afraid to live life, at that moment it becomes itself a vice in us—just as thrift becomes the most unlovely of the vices if we allow it to pass beyond the threshold of self-discipline into the unbridled habit of the miser.

The moment that the Puritan in us becomes fearful of the splendour of life, the moment that it makes us mistake the denials of life—the law Thou Shalt Not—to be the reality of life instead of the more majestic law Thou Shalt with Honour (God's law, or wherefore made He us ?) ; from that moment Puritanism becomes a black sickness and an abomination. From that moment life is warped and distorted.

And one of the surest signs of that black sickness coming to a people is its suspicion of the Arts—that mad Frenzy that would crush even the good out of the arts, since evil may also be in them ! As though there were anything Good which may not be made Evil. As though excess of Puritanism into asceticism were not a vile evil, driven far enough—and a brutally cruel evil when given way to !

Puritanism, grown fantastical, would strangle art altogether, life altogether, mistrusting others to use art nobly, since it mistrusts its own powers to use them cleanly.

You shall see this Puritanical suspicion and enmity towards the arts in every race. The Mahomedans are forbidden the carving of figures in or on their mosques, forbidden the portraiture of men : lest the faithful fall to the worship of images. Yet the True Believer flings his life away in battle, urged to it by the emotional oratory of his faith ; and, where he falls, you shall ever find about his neck, worn as a little charm to keep his quaint, fantastic soul from harm, sewn into exquisitely wrought leather work, fragments of the mighty literature of the Koran ! An art within an art !

So the Roundheads, thundering against the arts lest they turn men's eyes to graven images, made the land hideous with works of art destroyed ; yet, even as they did these scandalous and childish things in the name of the Lord, they listened with bent heads of reverence to the parables

of the Man of Sorrows, and went into battle shouting the Psalms, their nerves thrilling to the music of words wrought by the master-skill of the great Elizabethan translators of the Bible !

Now, there are Puritans so narrow of vision that they prefer to suffer a plague of boils as the will of God rather than take to prettier habits that evade boils, being of the egoism that considers the Creator particularly interested in sending them boils. But there are Puritans of more reasonable substance, and these but need to be shown the real significance of art in order to pursue it. And since the influence of the Puritan is prodigious, his initiative enormous, his power great, and since it is the Puritanical part of the community, without question, that is to-day most eager to know and understand, and to achieve, the Puritan is worth convincing. He has the desire, if a somewhat fearful desire, to know the truth and to seek it. He is, 'tis true, timid about leaving the achieved and solid ground in order to reach higher—like a child wanting to walk, but afraid to leave all fours. He is so steeped in Thou Shalt Not that he at once puts on alarm before even a hint of Thou Shalt. It is as though a man feared to light a fire to warm his blood lest he fall into the flames—who therefore cowers in some chill unlit corner of a dingy existence, shivering from dread of burning ; as though to drink of the wine of life made it a necessity to stoop to hoggishness. He has come to look upon this unworthy fearfulness of living life as though it were a virtue — nay, has he not even invented nunneries of old, forgetting that to fear to live is as ugly contempt of his body's significance as the wallowing in, and making bankrupt, the splendour of the wondrous miracle that has been granted to him for the using—and of which it is said that he may one day be asked to render an account.

Therefore, it is certain that if he can be persuaded to listen to the mighty significance that is in the Arts, he will confess his sin and put foolishness from him.

And it is possible. Mark this well, it was the Puritan who stood for Liberty. It was he who aforetime was champion of Free Speech, the enemy of tyranny, the breaker of hide-bound laws. Being come to power, he has clothed himself in tyrannies.

Let us allow for argument that the Puritan is right in his suspicion of the arts. So be it. *But what does he set up for himself as being of more vital aim in life than these activities ?*

To what chief end does he mould his life's career? Reduced to practice, his chief aim in life is Thrift. Not the sublime thrift of thriving, but the thrift of saving. He lives for thrift—to make money—success in Business. He bends everything to that; sacrifices everything to that—health, wit, friends, life, brains, everything. He pursues wealth—not the common weal but personal thrift—with a stubbornness of purpose and a singleness of ambition which are astounding. Does he not even write books? "*Get On or Get Out.*" My godmother! what a stripping naked of a soul! And how it sells! and smells!

Now Thrift, indulged in with virile restraint and in due degree, is a good and honourable thing. But Thrift become the goal and chief aim of this our little wandering to and fro before the light goes out, surely becomes the most sordid of all vices, the grey unlovely habit of the miser! It is Thrift gone crazy—as everything the Puritan approves tends to become. Approval gone crazy—everything he hates, Hate gone crazy.

Follow such a man into his unlovely home, clutch his soul by the throat and shake the truth from him—dig out the grey matter of his brain, examine it, and you shall find figures and percentages thick as microbes in the nasty mess.

Track him to his unlovely office where he lives the greater part of his day, and you shall find him passing this precious lease of life, that is his for all too short a while, and shall never again be his, in an atmosphere that makes of life a sordid dunghill.

Yet this ideal of mere Commerce being the whole standard of a nation's splendour, how universal it is to-day! It is flung at us as the All and End of national aspiration, and the whole fabric of a people's grandeur. What has it to do with Peace or Brotherhood or one's duty towards one's fellows, or the nobility of life? Are its Heroes such fine fellows, when all's said? When a Chancellor of the Exchequer dares to breathe that the people have a right to *live*, is it not these very Heroes and their Parasites who baulk him?

I tell you Commerce is War. From morning until night, War—and a hideous form of war only too often. Its very basic principle is to buy from one man at the lowest price to which you can grind down his brain and the labour of his hands, in order to sell at a higher price to others—that

usury that was the scorn of the Man of Sorrows whom the Puritan worships of a Sunday. What are the awful cruelties and brutalities of War compared with the infinitely more vast and brutal wreckage of human lives and human hearts and hopes that are the blood-toll of Commerce? Indeed, for what are wars waged but for Commerce?

We can pay too high a price for Thrift. Let the Puritan in us beware of the idols he sets upon his altars.

Let Thrift keep its right proportion in our day.

Live life full—do not rush through a sordid day, threading or pushing your way through the vulgarities to mean goals. Let no man crouch in dark corners fearful of forward living, lest he fail to reach the heights. The man who is merely rich in gold may be but a prisoner in a gilded cage, poorer in the splendid thrill of life, more ragged in the humanities, than the poorest of the poor. For that man who accounts himself rich, and has no generosity of sympathy with the poor and the suffering about him, who knows nought of the wounds and the sorrows and the hungers and the agonies that vex his race, nor of the aspirations and high hopes that are the beacon-light to his fellow-men, is utterly poor, a thing of contempt.

Is it riches to sit within the four walls of a narrow counting-house, day in day out, for four score and ten years, and know that you but possess gold? Even the mightiest poet can at best but write a poem; it is the birthright of every man to live one. They that grub for wealth as an end are like mad swine that bury their eyes in noisome swill, unsuspecting that life is a glorious pageant—and goes by.

Of a truth, art like thrift can be debauched; but shall a man therefore shrink from increasing his experience in the vast realm of ennobling emotions? Life is a great Thou Shalt; not an enfeebling incubus of belittling Thou Shalt Nots.

And this stately edifice of man's imagination, this splendid realm of art, the Theatre—do you mean to tell me in sober seriousness that it is to be narrowed down to the province of a booth at a fair? a place set up but to tickle the country-bumpkins into yaw-haws or bring spluttering titters from gilded noodles? a whirligig for the making of laughter? a mere place of amusement? a junket, much like the kicking of a tin can up and down an alley?

Life is made of far more majestic and wondrous things, far more thrilling things than laughter. So, therefore, is Art.

THE PURITAN AND THE THEATRE

Men and women go to the theatre, not for amusement, but for the thrill of life—to get away from their narrow day, to live awhile in a wider world, to step into the realm of the higher emotions; to peer at a larger life; and to walk amidst a larger experience. In the theatre, the apprentice may know awhile something of the power and the majesty of kingship over man, be made to feel the awful dignity of the lordship over the world—the princess may learn to weep and laugh and rejoice with Cinderella—the sheltered rich to share the dignity of the heroism of the laborious poor. Each man and woman in the hushed theatre rises for awhile out of self; and, so certainly do the homely virtues prevail, each man in spirit crosses the footlights and struts it in the hero's habit, each woman trips it in the heroine's cloak. The burglar in the gallery is he who most loudly hisses the villainies. 'Tis the city cheat and swindler in the stalls who loudest claps his gloved hands at cry of "Stop thief!" For awhile even the base are drunk with nobility.

The theatre is a great republic where, for a few hours of an evening, all men are equal; ay, and if the full truth were known, many a conscience has awakened in its ranked tiers. No man leaves a great play without having enlarged his life, and without having added to his circle of familiars the comradeship of the heroes of the imagination.

And surely it is a splendid thing to be made to thrill with the high aspirations, the emotional enthusiasms, the broad humanities that make for the heroic in man! Surely it is no ignoble thing to be made to suffer shame for his shame—to be made to hate what is hateful—to be overcome with pity for what is pitiful, with contempt for what is contemptible! Even to know the remorse that another has known is to enlarge the heart, to increase the scope of the manhood and womanhood of the race—to add territory to the garden of life. Surely *that* is a handsomer personality that is the richer for having known lofty sensations than is the empty frightened entity of him who crawls timidly along the shadows of a narrow path to mean goals, whose shrinking from the splendid adventure of living is the sole aim of his paltry egoism, whose barren lack of the noblest emotions and daring of man is his chief source of fantastic pride!

The Financial Aspect of Home Rule

By T. M. Kettle

In ordering their statistical artillery to "concentrate on the finance of Home Rule," the Unionist leaders have shown a certain grasp of tactics of the more obvious kind. They realise that the other "arguments" against this special application of the gospel of freedom have exploded in their hands. Ireland is peaceful, the only menace of disorder being that which comes from Sir Edward Carson and the Loyalists. Nobody believes that Mr. Redmond will set up a stake in College Green, and burn Protestants at it. Nobody believes that he wants to cut the painter, and hand Ireland over to some anonymous and hypothetical invader. Least of all does anybody believe that the secretly-cherished dream of Irish Nationalists is to keep their country, for all time, in rags and beggary. These charges had their discreditable vogue twenty years ago, and the England that listened to them paid for it by an expensive war and a ten years' postponement of all social reform. But they are dead, as dead as the topical songs of 1895. Intruded into the politics of of 1912 they resemble nothing so much as the *débris* of some masquerade, belated more than is seemly, and flourishing, in the mid-day street, foolish masks and soiled dominoes. The finance of Home Rule, on the contrary, is not only a real, but, at least as regards details, a governing issue. The scheme adopted will affect the whole structure of the settlement, including, for example, the question of "in" or "out" of Westminster. Money problems are always interesting in themselves, and they abound in material for that type of publicist whom I may perhaps call the half-truther. When it is added that the present state of the Irish public accounts, so far as we have any, does, beyond all cavil, disclose a difficulty calling for the most courageous statesmanship, it will not seem surprising that Unionists should "concentrate on finance." The apparent weakness of the Home Rule

position, however, does not in fact exist, and the hotter the Unionist attack the heavier will be their losses. But the situation demands candour, and, in a spirit of complete candour, I propose to state the elements of the problem, and to indicate the main lines of a solution.

I

The problem is, in truth, very simple. It consists in this, that the two sides of the Irish account do not appear to balance. Prior to the Old Age Pensions Act, Irish revenue paid for every branch of government in Ireland, and left a surplus for Imperial purposes which, during the South African war, rose as high as £2,852,000 in a single year, and for the quinquennial period 1900-1905 averaged £2,400,000 per annum. But Old Age Pensions in Ireland involve an annual charge of £2,408,000, and there has also been an increase of expenditure on the Land Commission, the Congested Districts Board, and education. As a result the Imperial surplus has disappeared, and has been replaced by a substantial deficit in the purely Irish account. The actual figures given by the Treasury for the two-year period 1909-11 are the following:—

Irish Revenue . . .	£19,861,500
Irish Expenditure . .	22,057,000
Deficit	£2,195,500

In 1910-11 local expenditure in Ireland was £11,344,500, her revenue under normal conditions of collection approximately £10,000,000, leaving a deficit of about £1,300,000. How, in these circumstances, ask Unionist critics, is Home Rule possible? Since it is clear that we are not able to pay the piper we have no right to call the tune. They go on to say that even if it were possible for us to set up house on a budget, which at present rates of taxation does not make ends meet, it would none the less be foolish and unpatriotic. Irish Unionists, like Mr. Samuels, K.C., are amazed that we should seek to alter the terms of the Act of Union precisely at the moment at which it has begun to yield Ireland a dividend. They counsel us to cherish the deficit, now a mere babe and nursling, and to see that it grows. English Unionists, like Mr. Walter Long, recommend us,

with an ill-disguised sneer behind the advice, to maintain the present system for its "largely eleemosynary benefits." Even Lord MacDonnell, who in his own strong, non-gregarious way is a Liberal and a Home Ruler, hopes that his countrymen will be hard-headed enough not to cut themselves off "now that England has begun to open her purse-strings."

Ireland, in brief, is invited to accept the status of a remittance-man, and to sponge on the bounty of Great Britain.

The invitation is not without its appeal to the average, sensual citizen. Had public opinion been as completely corrupted out of all independence by Imperial doles as some commentators would have us believe, the invitation might well be accepted as the last stroke in the process of killing Home Rule with kindness. Further, it has sound historical justification. The definite promise of the Act of Union was that, after the amalgamation of the Exchequers, Ireland as a poor country should be allowed to dip her hand into the purse of her richer partner. Had Castlereagh's assurances been made good by himself and his successors, the Irish deficit would have appeared not in 1909 but in 1817. All this is true, and the greater the truth the greater the peril to our manhood. Let me say, then, once and for all, that Ireland declines to accept, as permanent, a humiliation which is purely artificial. The fact that a certain course is in conformity with the Act of Union is to us merely a proof that that course is contrary to the nature of things. The bribed Parliament of 1800 preferred fleshpots, imaginary as things turned out, to freedom; we prefer freedom to fleshpots. This is, indeed, the root of the whole matter. The Irish Question, as things stand in 1912, includes an abnormality in public finance of the most striking kind, but in its essence it belongs to a much higher order of reality. It is a problem of freedom, not of finance; a leading case in Imperial and international politics, the settlement of which calls for men who are statesmen before they are actuaries. The situation is very clear. Ireland has, with unbroken continuity, long claimed the right to govern herself, to rely on herself, to pay for herself. The movement of thought and events in Great Britain has returned to Westminster a solid and substantial majority pledged to the concession of that claim. On the Ministry, then, lies the duty of devising a scheme for the constitutional recognition

of Irish nationality. That is the pith and soul of their task; finance is simply one of the conditions within which their work must proceed. Not inaptly has an enterprise demanding genuine courage fallen to the lot of the most courageous Government of modern times.

But while finance is not Home Rule, nor yet the solitary lion in its path, it is a real difficulty and, as such, must be faced and not shirked. It is alleged that Ireland cannot pay her way. Before proceeding to examine this statement we ought to direct attention to a notable self-contradiction, in which the spokesmen of Unionism continually involve themselves. In any typical utterance of, say, Sir Edward Carson, we find one line of argument advanced to prove, with the aid of Mr. T. W. Russell's statistics, that Ireland is amazingly prosperous, and that therefore the Union which has brought her this prosperity should not be altered. Later in the same speech we find it argued that Ireland is bankrupt, and that therefore she cannot afford Home Rule. These propositions cannot be simultaneously true. A country cannot at the same time be too rich to need freedom, and too poor to be able to pay for it: the thing is a paradox and a counter-sense. I beg the reader to approach this real question in a spirit of realism. Before he buries his nose in Treasury papers, let him look out at the facts as all the world knows them. Here you have an island situated at the cross-road of oversea commerce, and admirably furnished with bays and harbours; it comprises 20,000,000 acres of land, very fertile for pasture and agriculture, and rich in mineral and other resources, not as yet fully exploited. This island has a population of nearly 4,500,000 of the best West-European stock, not inferior in physical, intellectual, or moral qualities even to the English. The history of this people shows them to be endowed with powers of resistance, and especially of recuperation, almost miraculous. They survived a hundred campaigns of massacre, confiscation, persecution, and compulsory ignorance. Once only in the modern period, and then only for eighteen years, were they in a sort of way permitted to manage their own business; in that brief space they attained a brilliant position in industry, commerce, and culture. They are just engaged in a grandiose scheme of land purchase estimated to cost £210,000,000; on the £112,000,000 already advanced or bargained for, there is hardly one defaulting buyer and there is no bad debt, for the security of the land is ample. They have pioneered the

United Kingdom in agricultural co-operation and training, and are beginning to be as progressive farmers as any in the world. In manufacture their ambitions have re-awakened, and their whole economy is on the up-grade. Although external trade may be a very misleading test, we may none the less note that their trade with Great Britain exceeds that of India, and is nearly twice as large as that of Canada or Australia. They have conducted county government with efficiency and success, and now, for the first time, possess something like a complete educational system.

Will anybody be hardy enough to say that such a country, with such resources, is not able to pay for the government of itself by itself?

Such appears to me to be the real answer to the sophistications with which we are assailed. If only the time had come, for which Matthew Arnold sighed, when people should have ceased to repeat the obviously absurd, the case for Irish solvency might rest on this enumeration of plain facts; but it has not come, and so we must examine the deficit at closer range.

II

In plunging into the welter of Anglo-Irish finance, one hardly knows in which direction to strike out. It is, however, right to premise that the controversies upon it are largely of the nature of battles in the dark. The Treasury White Papers, which constitute our only "source," are in the highest degree unsatisfactory. On the expenditure side they are, of course, accurate as to cost of the various services. But in their classification of these services under the heads Imperial and Local they are a contravention of the Act of Union, which made all expenditure common, and they are at feud with reason and authority. On the revenue side they do not pretend to more than a conjectural value. There is no machinery in existence for a year-to-year record of the movements of dutiable articles between Great Britain and Ireland, and in calculating the contribution of Ireland in respect of such commodities as beer, tobacco, tea, and sugar, the Treasury has to rely on unchecked estimates made in 1903-4. For spirits, the correction of collected revenue into true revenue is effected by a somewhat less haphazard method, but it is far from

convincing. The first general conclusion to which we are led is that only a Home Rule Parliament can ascertain what is the actual revenue of Ireland. So far as our present knowledge goes, it seems to be under-estimated by some amount ranging between £230,000 and £400,000 per annum.

Our second general observation is that if any political faith is compromised by the appearance of the "deficit" it is surely that of Unionism. For the deficit appears as the fruit of 110 years' administration of the Act of Union. And it is no mere accident, but the direct financial expression of an unnatural system. In a self-governing country revenue and expenditure are the two arms of a balance, which must be kept in equilibrium under peril of national collapse. But in Ireland since 1817 there has been no need to establish any definite correlation between incomings and outgoings. Administrative uniformity has inevitably prevailed over what English statesmen grew to regard as the mere refinements of a treaty, no longer adequate to the circumstances of the time. Since the equalisation of taxes between 1853 and 1860 no attempt has been made to tax Ireland, as the Union requires, in proportion to her taxable capacity. Chancellors of the Exchequer have budgetted for Great Britain, dragged the net of taxation so devised through Ireland, and been more or less thankful for the take. On the other hand, no attempt has been made to equilibrate Irish revenue and Irish expenditure. Of late years, indeed, and especially since the Report of the Financial Relations Commission (1896), any increase of expenditure in Ireland, wise or foolish, has been grumblingly tolerated by both English parties as a set-off against past sins of over-taxation. The Unionists in particular adopted this method as a main ingredient in the policy of killing Home Rule with kindness. As for Ireland, seeing little hope of Home Rule in the immediate future, she was human enough and, let us add, in one sense imprudent enough, to take the cash and let some part of her credit go. The climax came with Old Age Pensions. The deficit, therefore, does not come as a dismaying and unforecasted portent, "shot out of a pistol," as Hegel said of Schelling's "Absolute." It was foretold by Mr. Gladstone in his speech introducing the Home Rule Bill of 1886, in clearer terms by certain members of the Childers Commission, and by many Nationalist writers in the interval. It proceeds with

inevitable logic from a vicious system, which at once deprives this Irish people of the control of the government under which they live, and makes them financially indifferent to its cost.

It is clear, then, that a continuance of the present system cannot restore the balance of health to Irish public finance. I do not, indeed, believe very much in the eleemosynary attitude of English Unionism, indicated by Mr. Walter Long. Were his Party back in power I am convinced that they would attempt to diminish the present British "subsidy" to Ireland by enhanced taxation, and by starving such services as education. But in the first point, at all events, they would fail, for we have very nearly reached the high-water mark of taxability. Ireland, therefore, were she to take low ground, could undoubtedly look forward to a "stream of British gold" as her price for playing renegade to freedom, and Great Britain is confronted with a corresponding menace. But we repudiate that prospect. We demand the *toga virilis*, whatever temporary sacrifice the assumption of it may involve. What then becomes of the "deficit?"

In order to put this question in its due perspective it is necessary to render a brief account of the financial relations of the two countries since 1800. History is of the essence of the Irish Question in all its aspects, but especially in this. We need bear in mind only the salient facts. The Union, as is known, inaugurated at the outset a quota system, which, in the words of the Childers Commission, "imposed upon Ireland a burden which, as events showed, she was unable to bear." Lord Castlereagh, founding himself upon tests which may have been honestly adopted, but which were grossly fallacious, exaggerated her power of contribution, and the temporary quota scheme broke down utterly under the strain of the French Wars. In 1817 a financial union was effected, but different tax-levels were retained in the two countries; between 1853 and 1860 all taxes, with one or two very trivial exceptions, were equalised. The effect of this system of fiscal uniformity was, in contravention of the Act of Union, to tax Ireland far beyond her taxable capacity. In 1893-4, for example, while her contribution was 8·33 per cent. of that of the whole United Kingdom her capacity was not estimated by any of the Commissioners as more than 4·76 per cent., and many of them put it much lower. At present, Great Britain in the interval having

advanced in prosperity at a much more rapid pace, the taxable capacity of Ireland is not more than 4 per cent. of the whole; her contribution for 1909-11 was 6·01 per cent. In other words, Ireland was grievously over-taxed in every year from 1800 to 1817: from 1817 to 1853 the over-taxation continued, but it was in the period from 1853 to our own time that the indiscriminate system weighed most heavily on her. The capital accumulation of the drain, no regard being had to interest, ranges somewhere between £200,000,000 and £400,000,000, according as the highest or the lowest estimate of our taxable capacity be taken. Under the Union, Ireland had down to 1909 paid for the whole cost of her internal government, and had contributed over and above to Imperial purposes a sum estimated by Professor Oldham at £330,000,000, and truly described by Lord MacDonnell as "An Empire's ransom." This Imperial levy was exacted from her in complete indifference to her economic condition at any given time. During the terrible year of the Great Famine, for example, she contributed out of her starvation and misery no less than £2,600,000.

What is the significance of these facts in their bearing on the present situation? Assuredly we do not recall them by way of a bitter and fruitless diatribe, nor do we impute to to Chancellors of the Exchequer any deliberate malice against Ireland. Public finance must work as an automaton if it is to work at all, and the process under review was the purely automatic result of Union and uniformity. But the effects on the whole economy of Ireland were none the less injurious. The whip did not fall any the less lightly on us because there may have been no malign intention in the wielder. I suggest to Englishmen that the facts recounted constitute a clear case of conscience. There is here no question of dragging the dead past indecently out of its grave. The forcible withdrawal of capital out of the economic life of Ireland, on the vast scale indicated, has left its mark everywhere, not only on industry but on character. And the Ireland of the eighteen-'forties and the eighteen-'thirties is the most living fact in our public finance of to-day. The survivors of that time revive their misery in a heavy and almost melodramatic fashion in the enormous Old Age Pensions Vote, which has directly produced the deficit. I note with surprise that Mr. Erskine Childers, in his admirable book,

The Framework of Home Rule, bids us dismiss summarily what he styles the theory of "restitution." Let us not quarrel about phrases. If the word "restitution" savours too much of the Surrey Theatre, let us dismiss it by all means. But is there not behind it an ethical reality which cannot be so lightly waved aside? Half the purpose of Home Rule is to make amends for the past, and thereby to cancel it. How can the past be amended if we begin by ruling out every factor of it that affects the public finance, and the material interests of Ireland? Mr. Childers must remember that when we Nationalists come to advocate the solution, on the terms of which we are in substantial agreement with him, we shall be taunted with being mere sturdy beggars at the door of English benevolence. It is incumbent on us to tell the other side of the story also. I do not press the matter, merely repeating that for an England, conscious of her own past policy, the finance of Home Rule is not merely a political problem but also a case of conscience.

III

In any event the facts must of necessity be faced as what is called a business proposition. Let us come straight to the point. The present writer ventured, just twelve months ago, to forecast as the first of the presents, proper to celebrate that happy union of the two islands, which can be effected only by a generous scheme of Home Rule: Great Britain, a cheque. His forecast was received with nervous derision, if that is not a contradiction in terms, by Unionist critics, and even his Nationalist friends treated him for some considerable time with the frowns and taciturnity reserved for those who have committed flaming indiscretions. But facts will have their way in the end. Nobody of any party, not even Mr. F. E. Smith, who distorts the proposal *more suo* in the *Daily Mail Year Book* just issued, can raise a genuine shudder at the suggestion. The idea that the Home Rule Parliament must have some sort of initial nest-egg has become a political commonplace. The well-informed do not now ask if it is to be given; they ask in which of the alternative forms it is to be given, whether as a lump sum grant, an annual subsidy for a period of years, or the assumption by the Imperial Parliament of the cost of certain services in Ireland. Opinion has taken this set for reasons

very easily understood. The "deficit" is not a menace of Home Rule, it is a fact of Unionism. Here it is, and here, like MacMahon in the Malakoff, it remains so long as the unamended Union remains. It is idle for any Englishman to declare that he will never pay a "subsidy" to Ireland since he is already paying it. Sensible men have therefore naturally begun to ask themselves which of the two programmes offers the more pleasing vista. Under government from Westminster the deficit apparently stretches on into an indefinite future, certain automatic reductions being at least neutralised by increases no less automatic. Under that *régime* Great Britain cannot economise, because tyranny is always expensive, and Ireland will not economise, because she stands to gain nothing by it. And for a subvention, grudgingly given and cynically received, there will be no results to show except growing discontent and demoralisation in Ireland. Under Home Rule, on the contrary, Great Britain gets an opportunity of facing and settling the question once and for all. She can commute the "deficit" and, as the phrase goes, cut her losses. By a policy, so clearly advantageous to her in a business point of view, she can at the same time meet the political claim of Ireland, and win from a country, now estranged, loyalty and friendship. Between these two paths it cannot be difficult to choose.

We are led irresistibly to the same conclusion if we approach the matter from the opposite point of view. In answer to the question whether Ireland can pay her way, we answer that she manifestly can, but that the way of government in Ireland for the last eleven decades has not been her way. It would be as reasonable to ask her to pay for the whole fabric of administration, which she is to inherit, as to ask the newcomer, who has just sat down at a restaurant table, to pay for the dinner supplied to the orders of the last guest. Let me take one glaring instance—the Police Vote. For 1910-11 this was something more than £1,450,000. The significance of this figure is at once apparent; had the Treasury treated it as an Imperial and not an Irish charge the official "deficit" would, at one stroke, be changed into a small surplus. Now, if we look to the history of the force, its entire cost ought to be thrown on the Imperial Exchequer, for that was the definite promise of Sir Robert Peel. And if we judge the case on its merits, we shall see how iniquitous it would be to make a Home Rule Parliament responsible for the whole of the establish-

ment. In the words of Lord Welby, "a distinction must be drawn between the force sufficient to deal with ordinary crime, and that which is rendered necessary by the relations between Great Britain and Ireland." Throughout its history the constabulary in Ireland has been mainly a weapon of Imperial policy, a *gendarmerie* used to uphold, against the will of the Irish people, a system of landlordism which Mr. Balfour himself was afterwards to describe as the worst that the world had ever known. On contemporary facts it is absurdly unjust to saddle a Home Rule Parliament with a police vote of nearly one and-a-half millions per annum. The country is profoundly peaceful, the tumult of the Land War is over, and the maximum cost of a domestic force ought to be about £650,000. We must not be asked to pay for the cudgels with which we were beaten. A great deal of money is spent in Ireland, and on Ireland, in the same way in which a great deal was spent in the Transvaal, and on it, during the South African war. But, instead of asking the Boers to pay for the lyddite fired at them, Great Britain very properly helped on their self-governing household with a large grant.

The principle that, in general, outstanding liabilities ought to be liquidated by those by whose will and for whose behoof they were contracted, governs the whole transaction. It certainly applies to the Irish share of the National Debt. For the separate debt of £28,500,000 which Ireland brought with her into the Union she may fairly be held responsible, but that debt has long ago been extinguished by the over-taxation tribute. As to the increase of £112,000,000, imposed on her by the foreign policy of Mr. Pitt and his successors, I cannot see upon what principle, moral or political, she is responsible for one penny of it. Her consent to the war was never asked; it was waged to keep out of these islands the "errors" of the French Revolution which, if admitted to Ireland, would at all events have reformed her land system; and, while it had the incidental effect of establishing the industrial greatness of England, it brought no such prosperity to us. The subsequent growth of the National Debt was motived by policies in which it cannot be argued that we had any part either of counsel or of profit. For Land Loans and Local Loans we are of course wholly responsible, and as security for their repayment we are willing under Home Rule to give the Imperial Parliament a lien on any asset and any source of income. To this

statement there is one qualification. The bonus allocated under the Wyndham Act to aid land purchase was definitely announced as an Imperial grant. The present annual charge on the bonus Stock so far issued, amounting to about £170,000, is entered in the Treasury accounts under a purely Irish Vote, that for the Land Commission, and of course helps to produce the "deficit." This is an Imperial charge, undertaken to aid in transforming the Imperial institution of landlordism. Neither under the Union nor under Home Rule can it with any show of justice, or even, let me add, with any sense of irony, be thrown on the shoulders of Ireland.

If the reader will make even the two corrections suggested, and a further slight correction for the present under-estimate of Irish Revenue, he will observe that the "deficit" has to all intents disappeared. But it is not my purpose to work out a detailed Budget: everybody one meets nowadays has a little scheme of his own in his pocket. Our immediate concern is to formulate certain guiding ideas which, steadily applied, disclose the clue to the labyrinth. From the facts, baldly stated above, certain conclusions emerge, which may be shortly summarised. Great Britain is at present "paying a subsidy" to Ireland which, under the Union, will not diminish. Ireland does not want subventions in perpetuity, she wants freedom. It is therefore good business on the part of Great Britain to commute the subsidy. It is good ethics on her part to pay for at least some portion of the machinery of repression which she imposed on Ireland against the will of that country. These two aims can be simultaneously achieved in the Home Rule settlement. Further, any temporary subventions, accompanying the grant of self-government to Ireland, will be not only a liquidation of the past but an investment for the future. They will enable Ireland to find her feet, to realise her possibilities, to improve her taxable capacity, and, in a brief term of years, to become a strength to the Empire.

Two real questions remain for consideration: What is to be the amount of the subsidy? In what form is it to come? It seems to be a misapprehension on the first point that has led Mr. Erskine Childers to decry "restitution." He imputes to us a demand for a sum commensurate with the over-taxation tribute; that is to say, running into hundreds of millions. Nobody has suggested anything of the kind as a matter of practical politics, whatever may have been said on the moral aspect of things. What we do ask

for is a temporary makeweight that will equilibrate our finances during the transition period *plus* a nest-egg for economic development. The computation of the second claim gives scope for that generous dealing which we call statesmanship. The computation of the first can be reduced almost to an exercise in accountancy. The future of Irish public finance is not wholly dismal. Certain reductions of expenditure will come of themselves. In the case of Old Age Pensions, for example, we are now paying on the residue of a population of more than eight millions; in twenty years, while, of course, the present and intermediate crops will not have wholly died out, nevertheless the new crop will represent the residue of a population of less than six millions. It is further obvious to all the world that, owing to the fact that the Act was not framed to meet Irish conditions, many old people, who do not really need pensions, are now entitled legally and quite without fraud to obtain them. An Irish Parliament will, for the sake of its own solvency, be compelled to separate the deserving from the undeserving. Again, the Land Commission, both in its rent-fixing and its land purchase functions, must, in some fifteen years, have ground all the grist that there is to grind. Already six million acres of Irish land have been vested, and in respect of eleven million acres, or nearly 60 per cent. of the agricultural area, purchase agreements have been signed. At the end of the period mentioned the Land Commission will be little more than an office for the collection of annuities. The case of the police has already been dealt with. As for the Civil Service, it is idle for apologists to pretend that drastic economies cannot be effected. Progress in this direction is subject to the limiting condition that no present *employé* of the State shall be damnified. But the present staff can be made available for new functions that will probably accrue to a Home Rule administration. And for all future accessions to the service, Ireland must have power to insist on a scale of salary more in keeping with her economic conditions. For the present system, let it be noted, costs far more than its money cost: the disproportion between business prospects and Civil Service prospects tempts too many brilliant talents away from industry and agriculture.

There is, of course, another side to the story. It would be altogether uncandid to suggest that Ireland will remain exempt from that modern tendency which Wagner, the great Austrian economist, formulates in set terms in his Law of

Increasing Expenditures. Education, in all its branches, will be a continually growing Vote. State Insurance will at maturity cost the Irish Exchequer some £700,000 a year. Money will have to be found, by loan, indeed, and not out of revenue, for drainage and re-afforestation. If a Dublin Parliament is to grapple successfully with the question of railways and of transportation in general, it must have some uncommitted resources at command. Further, public opinion will probably demand that some sort of State encouragement, whether through bounties or otherwise, shall be given, at least experimentally, to certain industries. Against these increased outgoings we must of course set off increased incomings. Without any change in the present rates of the taxes, we can look confidently to a yield steadily growing with the growth of prosperity.

These are the elements of a difficult problem. What are we to fix as the probable capital amount of the "subsidy"? Estimates have been made ranging from £20,000,000 to £40,000,000; but so many people have been sowing their own whimsies round the land that I refrain from flinging another, lest it should fall on the road or among the brambles. The question is one for the heads of the State. But we may formulate the outlines of two exercises in proportion. If the expropriation of landlordism was conceived to be worth £12,000,000 to the Empire, how much would the pacification of Ireland be worth? If £64,000,000 are spent annually on the Army and Navy, how much ought to be spent in order to transform an Ireland, now estranged, into an impregnable wall of defence against foreign invasion?

IV

When we ask in what form the British debt to Ireland is to be discharged we raise the whole question of the financial structure of the Home Rule Bill. Alternative schemes are possible, and only an opinionist can say that any one of them is absolutely and exclusively right. The minimal extreme is represented by Lord MacDonnell; the maximal by Professor Oldham, Mr. Arthur Griffith, leader of the "Sinn Fein" group, Mr. Frank MacDermott, and other prominent Irishmen, as well as by the *Irish Independent* newspaper. It finds support in England from

Mr. Childers and many Young Liberals. It is no discourtesy to Lord MacDonnell to say that his proposals do not call for any lengthy discussion. He proposes that any gap between Irish Revenue and expenditure in Ireland now existing is to be supplied by the Imperial Exchequer, and that an initial lump sum grant of £20,000,000 is to be made towards economic development. So far so good. But he does not give even our present direct taxation into the control of the Irish Assembly; it is merely to have some trivial power of subsidiary taxation. The Dublin Parliament is to be a spending body, economising within the limits of an assigned income. This is a mere simulacrum of responsible government: you may call it anything else you like, but you must not call it Home Rule. One speaks of what one knows; and I have no hesitation in saying that such a scheme would be rejected by a Convention with the same prompt contumely which overwhelmed the Irish Council Bill. The other extreme is represented by a demand for complete fiscal autonomy. In the public discussions, which have gone forward, this has been particularised into a demand for Customs and Excise. Mr. Childers proposes in addition that this Home Rule Parliament, autonomous from the first, shall receive an initial subsidy "destined to diminish by stated amounts, and within a few years to terminate."

That fiscal autonomy is the goal, towards which we must work, I heartily agree. That it must inevitably come, subject probably to a mutual agreement conserving Free Trade between Great Britain and Ireland, cannot, I think, be doubted. It is the only settlement that really puts Ireland on herself. It is her only guarantee against being plunged into a gamble of "scientific tariffs," devised for a country which, as Mr. W. S. A. Hewins truly says, is "organically" different from her. But English public opinion is gradual, not saltatory, in its movements. To stake the whole Home Rule settlement on the immediate concession of complete fiscal autonomy might turn out to be bad politics, and worse patriotism. The problem is to establish an Irish Parliament, endowed with real, though limited, power, and to make its efficient working an irresistible argument for further expansion. There appears to me to be safe middle ground between the two extreme positions. That was the ground which Mr. Gladstone occupied, and the Gladstonian model can be

adapted to present circumstances. I will conclude this paper with an attempt not to dogmatise on details, but to outline the general principles which must govern the finance of any Home Rule scheme.

There must be transitory provisions leading up to a final settlement. This plan is vehemently condemned on the ground that it will create a system of divided authority. No doubt that is true, but the division will not be perpetual. For a thousand reasons a temporary division is necessary: I will mention just one. The true revenue of Ireland is at present an unknown quantity. Until we know it we cannot know our financial position, and it can be ascertained only by actual experience. To enter into binding engagements, while still ignorant of our resources, is not prudent. As for the length of the change-over period, it will be noted that the changes in the Land Commission Vote, the Old Age Pensions Vote, and the general cost of administration are due to fructify in about fifteen years. That figure may be regarded as of some suggestive value.

From the first, the Home Rule Parliament must have untrammelled control of all direct taxation. This includes such items as income-tax, stamps, death and land duties. In respect of all these the Imperial Parliament ought not to have concurrent powers, even for purposes of war.

From the first, the Home Rule Parliament must have complete control of Irish administration. The vested interests of present officials must be honourably safeguarded; but, as regards all future appointments, the training, the duties, and the scale of salaries must be wholly within the determination of the Irish Assembly. That body should also fill all future vacancies in the judiciary, and should have power to fix future salaries.

Subject to a later proposal regarding the police, the "subsidy" should not be ear-marked. An initial lump sum grant appears to be, on the whole, the most satisfactory form which it could take.

The collection of Customs and Excise should be in the hands of the Irish Parliament, subject to Imperial inspection. In no other way can we make sure that the movements of trade, and especially of dutiable articles, shall be accurately recorded. Further, I assume that the Irish Parliament will have power from the first to levy export duties on its own home-produced exports, and a machinery of collection would be indispensable.

No "Imperial Contribution" can reasonably be expected for the initial period. Something in the nature of a peppercorn rent might, for constitutional purposes, be devised. After the lapse of the transitory provisions, some named quota of the Irish revenue might be assigned to this object.

To complete Land Purchase, Great Britain must honourably abide by her bargain to provide the use of Imperial credit. To improve her security she might be given a lien on the yield of our Customs, or our Excise, or both. This is a subject abounding in technicalities, but there is no substantial difficulty. The land, the real security for land purchase, is always there. So confident are we of the future of the tenant-purchasers that we are prepared to pledge, in any mode that may be arranged, any desired security on their behalf.

The Post Office should pass under Irish control. Naturally, working agreements of the friendliest nature would immediately be made to secure co-operation between the British and Irish Post Offices in handling cross-Channel and international correspondence.

The following proposal with regard to the Police is, I submit, worthy of consideration. It is submitted that the establishment should be forthwith broken into two parts. The smaller portion, about one-third of the whole, should be constituted a domestic police and handed over to the control of the Irish Government, which would, of course, bear the cost of this domestic establishment. The control of the larger section would remain with the Imperial Parliament, which would also assume the cost. This Imperial Police would serve to dissipate anxiety, if any exists, touching Imperial interests in Ireland. It would have the further duty of repressing the riots and disorder with which we are threatened, and would co-operate with the domestic police in enforcing the lawful authority of the Irish Assembly. As the need for such an establishment became less, Great Britain would have a direct pecuniary interest in reducing it to less colossal dimensions. After the initial period it ought to disappear.

All these transitory arrangements should be deliberately designed to lead up to the permanent settlement. As has been indicated, that can be none other than the concession to this ancient nation of Ireland of the political status under which the Colonies have grown strong, prosperous, and loyal.

This is a reasonable middle course. It will be assailed by one wing of critics as fantastically and dangerously generous, by another as a complete betrayal of the interests of Ireland. But it will carry the assent of the solid mass of the Irish people. They will put their shoulders to the wheel, and will accept their responsibilities with the enthusiasm of men restored at last to manhood. In a single decade they will have given so convincing a demonstration of the happy results of a limited Home Rule scheme, as will, in my conviction, remove the last obstacle to a larger measure. I beg the reader, once more, not to allow himself to be submerged in a sea of statistics, but to remember that the Irish Question in its present condition is a question not of finance but of freedom.

Play of the Month

"Bella Donna" and "Dear Old Charlie."

Poison, with its lingering properties and potentialities, is a "drawing" theme for a play, and *Bella Donna* is a real poison affair, which what is called "all London" will certainly go to see, and would no doubt attract even the redoutable Dr. Crippen, were he not, himself, at this moment on show in the "Horrors" chamber at Madame Tussauds. There is not much Robert Hichens about it perhaps; not much of the Bernard Fagan we have admired as playwright, but the thing is Fagin-esque right enough, and the sight of our greatest actress brewing cups of poisoned coffee, *à la* Maybrick, for her doting ingenuous husband, is too good to be missed spectacularly, because as *Bella Donna*, as the gypsy wanton, bewitched by a tall, satanic Egyptian in a fez and four times a millionaire, Mrs. Patrick Campbell has never radiated forth such alluring and tempestuous beauty, and never been fitted to a part so natural to her genius and expression. Her hair is black as Mary Fitton's. She is at times enthrallingly beautiful, Nilotic. She is the play, the colour, the voice, the sense, the poison, and the result is that she acts husband, lover, doctor, and everyone else right off the stage, including Sir George, who trips about with Miltonic toe, but is otherwise curiously admirable as a Jew specialist of Harley Street. *Bella Donna*, then, or the eternal feminine of charm and stratagem, is the theatrical attraction of the month, and the thrill is adroitly sustained and cumulative, as the action of poison should be, terminating in a glance from *Bella Donna* that would have unmanned almost any male, except this one from Harley Street, and the disappearance of Mrs. Campbell, like a figure of Grecian doom, in a shawl the colour of deadly nightshade, through the portal of the garden on further quest of love and the unknown—in fact, at the crisis in life that Ibsen usually seizes to begin his plays with, leaving us very glad that Scotland Yard has not been called in and secretly wondering

whether the appointment of "Dear Old Charlie" as Censor has not been vouchsafed to us as antidote.

Bella Donna is not what Bernard Shaw would call a "pleasant" play; it is certainly not a piece to take one's young daughter to; but, then, nor was "Dear Old Charlie," which was described by the critics at the time as a "cynical glorification" of illicit love. And *Bella Donna* raises the serious question why we are to have poison dramas on our stage, dramas of subtle and corroding suggestion, when the man who sits on the censorial bench with Mr. Redford is famous as the wag and purveyor of indelicate buffoonery. There is nothing to be said against Mr. Brookfield, of course. It is the Lord Chamberlain who is to blame; but against him it is high time that the artistic and intellectual endeavour of London took some co-operative and decisive action. To begin with, it is very foolish of a Liberal Government not to try and do something to free the Halls and the entertainment theatrical business from the pronounced anti-Liberal bias which flourishes in such places, and must lose the Party many votes, for the best way to perpetuate the Jingo Hall sentiment is to strangle the creative work of the serious workers in the country—the work of Shaw, Gordon Craig, Galsworthy, Granville Barker, etc.—as the best and only way to restore our theatre to its due vitality and performance is to give all needful encouragement to the honest artists who are working so ardently for its reform. Ridicule kills nothing in England, or "Dear Old Charlie" would have "done" it. The appointment of the man who described the Victorian era as the "golden age" of British drama is palpably an offence to the intellect of London. As well ask a Beefeater to unravel the mystery of Shakespeare's sonnets; or appoint a maiden, sighing for the vote, to teach "elevation" to the Russian *corps de ballet*. The thing is grotesque, monstrous. One would like to know, seriously, why a poison play such as *Bella Donna* is licensed and "Waste" is prohibited; why "Monna Vanna" is taboo and "Scheherazade" is uncensored; why "Dear Old Charlie" is passed and "Mrs. Warren's Profession" is banned; why, again, girls can dance "Salome" with as many Clarkson heads of the Baptist as they please at the Halls, while in the serious opera there must be no head?

These things would not be tolerated in England if people would regard the arts seriously, as they do in other countries, and would only devote a little more attention to the per-

manent matters of the world and a little less to the vexing vapidities of party politics. Here is a matter crying out for women's interference. Freedom of art is far more important to England than the question of Mr. Lloyd George's insurance taxes, which, as a principle, have been accepted by both parties. *Bella Donna* on the stage, and "Dear Old Charlie" as the constabular protector of the English stage, is an anomaly that cannot hold.

Only the other day, "La Vierge Folle" was held up by the censor, presumably because he thought the title contained a biblical reference to the "unwise virgin." Such things are absurd. That play was a far less harmful one than Mr. Brookfield's "Old Charlie." The fact is, the Lord Chamberlain has made a mistake.

S. O.

U of M

William De Morgan, by J. Kerr Lawson.

Books of the Month

ART

NOTES ON THE ART OF REMBRANDT. By C. J. HOLMES, M.A. Chatto & Windus. 10s. net.

When Mr. Holmes writes on the philosophy of art he writes with authority. His own chapter in the history of art is still with point and brush in the writing. In his use of watercolour he is with the more intelligent moderns, who, returning to the traditions of the early nineteenth century, conceive the true character of the medium to be best manifested in the washed drawing. Like Jongkind, and like Love, later, D. S. McColl, Neville Lytton, Walter Taylor, Fox-Pitt, Doman, Turner and others he conceives the female wash of colour as a complement to the male line. If Goya married etching to aquatinta in monumental unity it is only in one plate that he experimented in feminism. In his oil painting Mr. Holmes stands out as essentially unsnobbish (using the word rather in the French sense). He refuses to don with every decade the accent that happens to be fashionable, and works at his technique with a single eye to the expression of the subject that holds him. In the interesting and stimulating "Notes on the Art of Rembrandt," with which he has just supplemented his "Notes on the Science of Picture-Making," it seems just possible that the author reads into the plates certain intentional supernatural sublimities on the part of the etcher. Are these perhaps not more rightly to be considered as accumulating from the etcher's intense sense of the sublimity of natural illumination, natural grouping, and natural character, and an intense power of seizing these? Is not the fact that a drawing begun as a *Raising of Lazarus* was finished as an *Entombment* a limit in this direction? It is surprising to find a painter cite the "Danae and Jupiter" etching as a proof that Rembrandt had not, at the time, mastered the art of working without a model. Surely while the figure of Danae is an admirable draught from life, the Jupiter is a somewhat abject afterthought *de chic*.

Is it impossible that while Mr. Holmes sees in the plate of Christ appealing to his disciples a "blaze of light" and "one of the earliest Impressionist works," Rembrandt himself would probably have remarked that the plate was simply unfinished. A Frenchman might say of Mr. Holmes "*Qu'il cherche trop la petite bête.*"

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE

A HISTORY OF ENGLISH CRITICISM. By GEORGE SAINTSBURY. Blackwood. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

In this volume Professor Saintsbury has abstracted the English chapters of his larger "History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe." The work of abstraction may not have been very much to his taste, but it has been excellently done, the "interchapters" to bridge over the gaps being admirable summaries. The author is—to use a favourite word of his own—a "preceptist" rather than a craftsman. There is little charm in his style, which is colloquial and unnecessarily allusive. He is overfond of using words from other languages, and jocosity is apt to invade both his notes and his principal matter with effect of a snob-nosed faun at a masque of the muses. Professor Saintsbury is also a fighter, and no fighter can be impartial. It is quite possible to disagree with him on many points, but this, after all, only means that he takes a personal, not an impersonal, point of view. In spite of all that a literary *arbiter elegantiarum* or a champion of objective historiography could say in disparagement this is a work of the highest merit. In the first place it is based upon vast reading and first-hand judgment in every case, yet this bulky material is marshalled and introduced without confusion or congestion. Secondly—and this is the great point—the book is stimulating. Its author fights for good things, and his valour is inspiring. His aim is to show that the body of English literary criticism has been unduly decried, and that, in reality, it bears comparison with that of any other nation. To form his own opinion the individual must perform the comparison for himself. It is useless to accept Professor Saintsbury's view that Aristotle, Longinus and Coleridge stand high above all other critics till one has read them and all the others. But Professor Saintsbury's appreciations of our great English critics, Ben Jonson, Dryden, Pope, Johnson, Coleridge, Hazlitt and Matthew Arnold are enlightening to all those who have not yet reached his heights of erudition. Moreover, he is not unfair to those from whose canons of criticism he diametrically differs; his praise of Matthew Arnold, against whom he tilts throughout, is unfeigned and ungrudging. This is because he holds fast to the golden rule, that the function of the true critic is the discovery and celebration of beautiful literary things. Beauty is beauty, goodness is goodness, wherever it is found, with whatsoever dross it is mixed. With this creed no critic can disagree. In Professor Saintsbury's work the true dignity of criticism is proudly maintained, with the very just proviso that it must for ever rest upon great knowledge, unwearied study and continuous comparison of literatures.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Letters of George Borrow to the British and Foreign Bible Society. Published by direction of the Committee. Edited by T. H. Darlow. Hodder & Stoughton. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

When Dr. Knapp was preparing his "Life, Writings, and Correspondence of George Borrow," the officials of the Bible Society sought in vain for the letters written to the Society by Borrow from Russia and Spain. These letters have now been discovered, and Mr. Darlow has edited and arranged them, supplying just such supplementary information as is needed to make the circumstances clear. The letters from Spain tell us little that we did not know before about his journeys, for all the descriptive letters were embodied almost word for word in "The Bible in Spain," with the omission of passages relating to business and certain sanctimonious expressions which he inserted for the edification of his employers. The letters are, however, of peculiar interest, both as showing Borrow's relations with the Bible Society, and because they throw some light on the vexed question of his veracity.

On the first point the letters written from St. Petersburg are of the greatest interest. Borrow came into the employ of the Society early in 1833. He at once set to work to study the Mandchou language, and was sent to Russia to attend to the editing and printing of a Mandchou version of the New Testament which had been made some time before by a certain Mr. Lipoftsoff. With an air of humility not unmixed with self-righteousness Borrow explains in his letters what incredible strides he has made in the mastery of Mandchou. He is expansive on the subject of the prodigious difficulties with which he is confronted, how by his own personal influence and incessant labour he has at length prevailed on the Russian authorities to allow the translation to be printed. Then there are further unthinkable difficulties over the printing, and when the Society remonstrates with him on the score of his long silence, he puts them humbly in the wrong with the tale of the successes which have at length crowned his toil and devotion. He has even contrived to win his way against Mr. Lipoftsoff, the translator of the very work of which, in the Russian fashion, he had been appointed Censor! "I was resolved 'to do or die,'" writes Borrow, "and, instead of listening and perplexing the Committee with complaints, to write nothing until I could write something perfectly satisfactory, as I now can." And although, at the end of two years, he informed the Society that the Bibles which had been printed at so great a cost would be useful to nobody but the aristocrats of Pekin and the inaccessible hordes of desert Tartary, the fact remained that Borrow had answered all official objections, and remained in the congenial service of the Society. As their agent in Spain he was destined to remain in that service till 1839.

On certain small points Borrow's letters do depart slightly from the account given in "The Bible in Spain." In nearly all cases that we have detected, as in that referring to his interview with the Prime

Minister Mendizabal, he has in the letters put a construction on events such as he thinks would be pleasing to the Society. But in the main the two accounts not only correspond, but are identical. Now it must be remembered that Borrow was not the only representative of the Bible Society in Spain, and he was far too shrewd to send accounts which might at any time be falsified. When he describes the miracle of salvation from ship-wreck in the letters as well as in his book, we may be sure that an event, concerning which so many persons could testify, was not wholly imaginary. No doubt he heightened the marvel and added colour to the picture, but the events were substantially as he described them. The identical terms of the letters and "The Bible in Spain" do on the whole go to show that Borrow was a more veracious writer than he has the credit of being. We in fact have no faith in the view that Borrow invented his adventures and merely "wrote up" his achievements. The fact is they are too good not to be true. The genius of Borrow lies in the fact, not that he created romances, but that he re-created them; that the things which happen did not escape his keen and curious eye; so that he left life as amusing, as strange, as varied, as romantic as it actually is—as it is to everyone who is curious enough to seek venture and quick enough to detect it when found. Borrow *sought* the picturesque; he found it and perceived it; and had the knack to put it down in good, simple English

WORD PORTRAITS. By MAXIMILIAN HARDEN; translated by JULIUS GABE. Blackwood. 10*s*. 6*d*. net.

These powerful sketches by Herr Harden, the slashing editor of *Die Zukunft*, have been excellently translated. In spite of the fact, which the translator points out, that his peculiar use of the German phrase cannot be properly reproduced in English, and that many of his allusions could only be taken by the Berlin public, the reader will catch a great deal of the exhilarating breeze which blows through the pages of Herr Harden's paper. The vigour of his language is at times quite extraordinary, surpassing that of our most vigorous magazine editor, and it is used in combination with a vividly artistic imagination and a very large knowledge of politics, art and literature. The essays on Bismarck and Holstein are extremely interesting to students of foreign politics—particularly the latter, which gives some insight into the personalities directing German foreign policy in the last few years. The sketch of the Empress Frederick, again, is one that will give English readers a point of view with which they are very unlikely to be familiar. Herr Harden is no less vigorous on artistic than on political personages. Lenbach is his studio, Matkowsky on the stage, are fine pieces of cinematography. The translation of this book, in fine, is a unique chance for those who cannot read German to learn something of the ideas of modern Germany.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

ESSAYS AND STUDIES. By Members of the English Association. Vol. II. Collected by H. C. BEECHING. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1911. 5s. net.

This second volume fully answers the expectations raised by the first. It opens with a sympathetic study of Jane Austen by Dr. Bradley, who draws attention, among other things, to what many readers of her works must have noticed; her anti-romantic outlook upon life. She was too keen an observer to tolerate vagueness or emotionalism in any form; she stands aloof from her characters, in a creative calm. But if she had Dr. Johnson's sanity and preference for purely human motives, she also shared some of his limitations—that odd ignorance, for example, of contemporary movements in France.

It is good to be reminded, by Mr. F. S. Boas, of the debt of Continental writers to Richardson, the great analyser of the heart—of the human heart, as he constructed it; for his personages are but puppets wound up to dance to a fixed tune, and one genuine *homo sapiens* blundering by chance among the wires of this complex machinery, would forthwith put the whole structure out of order. This defect may have contributed to the decay of Richardson's popularity, but the *homo sapiens*, it must be confessed, has been blundering a little too much of late.

There is a suggestive article by Mr. C. E. Montague, on "The Literary Play," and another one, on "The Particle ING in Place-names," which shows how the study has advanced since Kemble's day; after sifting these names through a crucible of patient research, Mr. Henry Alexander finds that not more than thirty per cent. are patronymics.

Enthusiastic illustration alone will not clear up a subject like the "Grand Style," and it was wise, therefore, of Mr. John Bailey to attempt to define it as "when (in poetry) a great subject is treated by the action of the imagination with severity or with a noble simplicity." Now, replace—if the verse permitted of such a proceeding—replace Milton's sonorous Latinisms by Anglo-Saxon, which is abundantly severe and nobly simple; would the "Grand Style" invariably persist? Perhaps. But how apt we are to be influenced by the mere colour of words, that arouse in us definite but indefinable moods of mind! A cognate essay is on "Description in Poetry" by Mr. A. Clutton-Brock, who contends, firstly, that beauty in poetic description is *irrelevant* unless it adds to the cumulative powers of the whole, and secondly, that it must be judged not by absolute standards but by its *relation to the theme*. Sound notions, these. The first might be taken to heart by certain modern bards; the second, by their critics.

Altogether, an admirable volume. The supply of material being practically inexhaustible, it is to be hoped that the annual will flourish, so as to become, ultimately, a mine of information for future scholars and for all who are interested in the growth of English literature.

POST LIMINIUM: ESSAYS AND CRITICAL PAPERS by LIONEL JOHNSON. Edited by THOMAS WHITTEMORE. Elkin Mathews. 6s. net.

We venture to think that Mr. Mathews was scarcely well advised in beginning the collected edition of Lionel Johnson with these Papers. We do not think that Lionel Johnson himself would have elected to have taken his stand by them all; and, this being so, it scarcely seems just to him to put them out in the forehead and forefront of his work. In not all of them is manifested that distinctive quality of his work that W. B. Yeats spoke of as "the loneliness and gravity of his mind, its air of high lineage." Most of them appeared in various journals, weekly and daily, as unsigned reviews, and Lionel Johnson must have been a fortunate man if, with the best will so ever, he was able to raise all of such work to a standard worthy of him. The quality of a review is conditioned by the book it reviews; and reviewers are seldom able to choose their books. We remember this when we read Lionel Johnson on Mme. Darmesteter's "Renan."

But then there are the others! True; there are the others. There is that excellent collection of four essays on Pater with which this book opens. There is the admirable essay on "The Fools of Shakspeare." There is the fine essay on "Poetry and Patriotism in Ireland" that W. B. Yeats issued from the Cuala Press in the same volume as one of his own. In these Johnson was at his best; or if not quite at his best, very near it, for, like most writers who count, he needed space truly to realise himself. And there are many others in this rare book of similar quality, with the result that it is a sure book to turn to for delight, so varied is the matter in it.

ON THE ART OF THE THEATRE. By EDWARD GORDON CRAIG. Heinemann. 5s. net.

"And I am perhaps more miserable than ever before in my life, because I realise the hopeless inactivity of England and our stage, the hopeless vanity and folly of the stage, the utter stupidity of every one connected with the Arts in England, the death-like complacency with which London thinks it is active and intelligent about these matters, the idiocy of that section of the Press which calls every courageous attempt to revive life and art 'eccentric,' that lack of comradeship in London, that best for twopence at all costs." With these words Mr. Gordon Craig lays bare his soul. They are only too true, but his book is no Jeremiad; it is rather a quite hopeful statement of his aims and intentions, which if they are veiled in somewhat nebulous dissertations are yet perfectly clear, reducible to the one central necessity of treating the Theatre seriously and artistically. That is to say there must be a stage-manager—a captain, a man trained to his calling, versed in the dramatic craft, an artist, someone with ideas and vision. And the first thing Gordon Craig would abolish is the photographic realism of our stage. The stage being an illusion, the reproduction of nature is obviously a fraud. The more life-like or real the scenery is the less is the illusion, and this

we were all able to test the other day on seeing Sumurun, and then the actual photography of Kismet—the one was charming because it was fantastic, artistic, the other, well, it is just what Craig describes such scenery: weak photographic reality. Here is the basis of the reforms Craig would initiate upon our stage. Without all question he is right. After the scenery of the Russians it may be doubted whether the old stereotyped wings and scenic business can last much longer. They have grown old. Yet as Craig shows, nothing can be done until the position of stage-manager is accepted, until there is a brain at the head of the theatre controlling the whole production. Nor is it at all the painter that he wants. The theatre must evolve and possess its own art, be a thing unto itself, and in time the actors will go and there will be super-marionettes—an idea this that must strike anyone who has ever seen the performances of the Sicilian marionettes. How much more impressive too are the women's parts in Shakespeare's plays recited instead of acted! The fact is—and it is manifestly a truth—acting has largely killed playwriting. To obtain one's illusion we must go back to illusion. It is infinitely more thrilling to read Macbeth than to see the witches hopping about on the heath on a darkened stage. And the reason is because of the photographic sham reality. This book deserves close attention. It embodies the idea of a new theatre, one that is for art and not for business. It outlines what one may call a new philosophy of dramatic creation.

A Little Pilgrimage in Italy. By Olave M. Potter. With eight coloured plates and illustrations, by Yoshio Markino. Constable & Co. 12*s*. 6*d*. net.

Miss Potter writes charmingly about Italy, and more than that, quite admirably, so that it is a real pleasure to follow her in what she calls her Pilgrimage to places not usually known to tourists; into Tuscany, into Lombardy, into the March of Ancona, into Umbria, which is called "Of the Saints." One is apt to be afraid of a book of travels in Italy written by a girl in the full flush of enthusiasm for Italian colours and life, but at once we are arrested by a certain charm of style, a sense of colour, a searching observation, which lead one to go right through the book and enjoy it thoroughly. Then there are the illustrations. These are of more than ordinary interest, because they give a Japanese artist's impressions of Italy. The book deserves to be bought for these alone. Mr. Markino is growing more Western in his drawings, perhaps they are less sensational, if one may use the word about him. On the other hand, they are far more mature. His colourings and atmospheric effects are quite unique in their line, and quite a number of the drawings of shrines and streets and fountains and portals are exquisitely subtle. Indeed the man who discovered the beauty of our fogs has found himself equally at home in the sun of Italy. His atmosphere is attuned accordingly. The Pilgrims set out to find happiness and have bequeathed it to us in a volume which has a very real artistic merit.

FICTION

ETHAN FROME.* By EDITH WHARTON. Macmillan. 3*s.* 6*d.* net.

In this small volume, within the limits of a story half the length of an ordinary novel, Mrs. Wharton has done all and more than other novelists would have done in the greater space. There is no living novelist who knows better how to construct a story. The book is a model of compression. Every stroke tells; every detail of conversation or incident has its essential place in the structure. But the effect is not that of thin economy. It is rich and full. In the earlier part of the story there are incidents the suggestions of which are grimly and tragically realised in the conclusion. Mrs. Wharton has a skill which she can only have learnt from the Greek tragedians in preparing by dramatic contrasts, irony, and reversal of fortune for the passionate dénouement. But no skill alone could have produced such stress and tenseness, such exaltation and depression, so highly emotional a romance brought to the dust with realistic cruelty. To Mrs. Wharton's vivid and romantic imagination is added a hard sense of fact. Conceive the elated moods of Stevenson tempered by the grimmest touches of Zola, and you have the holocaust of romantic passion and horrid fact which Mrs. Wharton can serve up to us.

She prepares us for the catastrophe from the beginning, showing to us the old man Ethan Frome, years "after the accident," with the gash still showing on his forehead, and his right side shortened and warped, still living at the bleak, solitary farm-house on the hill-side, working his meagre farm, coming in to Starkfield rarely, and speaking seldom. For he has had troubles, and the neighbours respect his gloom.

And then we see him in his youth, aged twenty-eight, when the trouble is brewing. His home is shared by two women. One is his wife, Zeena, older than himself, who had nursed his dying mother, whom he had married from sheer dread of solitude. She is tall, bony, fretful, a *malade imaginaire* nursing herself on patent medicines; her teeth are false; she looks hideous in bed; she complains at everything, and nags. Mrs. Zeena Frome is shown in the fewest words of conversation and description; but the portrait of this neurasthenic fixes itself on the mind, a memorable thing.

The other woman is Zeena's cousin, Mattie, an orphan, homeless. She has been taken under Zeena's roof, to do the work of a hired girl, without wages. The situation is obvious enough—but nothing is banal when it comes under Mrs. Wharton's hand. Ethan adores Mattie. A year's companionship with two such women has wrought upon him. In a sense it is a mere love-story, the love of Ethan for a woman to whom he must not declare himself, and the

* This is our second notice of *Ethan Frome*.

love of Mattie for Ethan. But it is a love-story invested with the true tragic poignancy. The two are only driven to self-revelation by the jealousy and remorselessness of Zeena. For one day and night Zeena goes away to see a doctor and hatch her plot. In the evening Ethan and Mattie sit by the fire in the usual manner, save that the seat of Zeena is empty. They talk about indifferent matters shyly and in dread of breaking the sweetness of their one evening. They shun the name of Zeena which creeps into their conversation hauntingly, as a thing of dread, and Ethan sees Mattie as she might be in his house, were Zeena dead. We know no description of love equal to this in contemporary English or American literature since Mr. Hardy was at his best. Every little thing that happens, from the spreading of the table to the breaking of the pickle-pot, is made ominous.

We will not tell how Mattie is driven away by Zeena, how Ethan takes her for the last time but one down the toboggan slide, and how, before the inevitability of parting, they resolve on one more rush down the slope, not past but into the dreaded elm. We merely point out that this magnificent, tempestuous passage concerning the lovers' resolve to die is followed by the far grimmer conclusion, the taking away of the two maimed, but not dead bodies, and the subsequent years of sinister grumbling and ugliness. That is the way in which Mrs. Wharton nerves herself to end her story. It is the cruel, modern way. It is bitter, it is almost intolerable—for we were absorbed in the fate of these persons—but it is brilliant.

THE FORGED COUPON AND OTHER STORIES AND DRAMAS. By COUNT LEO TOLSTOY. Nelson. 2s. net.

It is like a cinematograph show, these flash-like scenes of Russian life. Close upon the heels of the forging of the coupon come gleaming knives, axes dripping with blood, dark prison cells, highway robbery and horse stealing which pass before our eyes with sequential rapidity. We literally run as we read. The author never stops to moralise. He lets, it is true, St. Matthew step to the front for a little while. But that is all. On we rush again to the end, both bitter and sweet, of this amazing record of crimes and sudden conversions growing out of a schoolboy placing the figure 1 before 2; or rather out of a self-righteous father's refusal to grant his boy's frank request for three roubles to pay off a debt of honour. It is a "blood" certainly, but a "blood" that no parent should hesitate to place into his son's hands. "I care only for the idea, and I pay no attention to my style" Tolstoy once remarked to a friend. Yet it is the idea which has been the fiery furnace that has forged his incisive style. Surely, only Tolstoy amongst all didactic artists, from Jeremiah to Blake, would have observed of a magistrate confronted with a murderer who had seen the light: "He felt a strange sensation, just as if he were lifting up his foot to ascend a step, to find none."

THE SHAPING OF LAVINIA. By F. BRITTEN AUSTIN. Constable. 6s.

This might have been a first-class novel of the life and habits of that great class from which the city clerk and the typist are drawn, had Mr. F. Britten Austin kept to his business as a novelist and not attempted to introduce plot and sensational incident into his theme. Sensations of a melodramatic order do certainly happen among these people, now and then, as they do in all social spheres, but it would have augmented the verities had Mr. Austin given his readers a picture in low tones, maintaining interest by the unfolding of character and the quiet revelation of the desires and aspirations, the interests and romances, of the bare and even life of clerks. Mr. Austin possesses the necessary equipment for such a task. He is very promising as a delineator of character, but he fails as a creator of action, because his actions are foreign to his motive. An embezzling clerk, flying from the police in an agony of fear, and getting killed beneath a motor 'bus, for instance, jerks you out of the narrative. Such things may happen to clerks, but they are not characteristic. Again Mr. Austin metes out death to his puppets, towards the close of the novel, with the nonchalance of a Shakespeare, but without Shakespearean excuses. Such violence is all very well in the life of a Hamlet or a Lear, but it strikes a false note in the life of Lavinia, the typist, whose young husband is first unfaithful, then a matrimonial deserter, and, finally, a returned, reformed and generally improved prodigal. "The Shaping of Lavinia" lacks perspective rather than interest, however, and it is by no means devoid of passages of real insight and fine pathos.

THE DOLL. By VIOLET HUNT. Stanley Paul & Co. 6s.

It is an accepted theory among women that no man understands a woman whereas any woman understands every man, but sometimes on reading the work of brilliant lady novelists one finds oneself wondering why the women in their books seem to men so curiously unreal, so utterly unlike the women the plain man does know and does probably know something definite about. Miss Violet Hunt is always interesting, moreover she has quite the French knack of "undressing" her people, and in "The Doll" she has plainly let herself go. Bits of these men and women are horribly life-like in tone, but the author seems to have got afraid of her theme. Melodrama puts up a mocking face, somehow the pieces don't fit together and the result is a book that is alarmingly unequal and—disappointing? No, the author is never that, but just a little distressing; the men are all the to-day type, dull and stupid, the interest centres round a flirtatious married woman and her daughter who is a racy specimen from the shires. It is really a Suffragette problem, but the author has not faced it squarely and indeed seems to have changed her mind half-way in the book, the problem remaining unsolved. She has to admit that man

is man and that no theorising can alter the fact ; he learns a little about women too. Written rather slovenly in places but still a book to be read, a novel of modern life and its complexities which if it does not probe very deeply, illuminates the weaknesses of our civilisation and leaves us a little uncomfortable.

MOONSEED. By ROSALIND MURRAY. Sidgwick & Jackson. 3*s.* 6*d.* net.

Miss Murray has repeated in "Moonseed" the technical success which she achieved in "The Leading Note." Her style is the result of devoted attention to certain Russian and French models, especially Turgenev. It is purely imitative. It aims at an extreme simplicity. The device is that of making certain plain statements, and so arranging them that much more is hinted at than is said. Where the typical English writer would indulge in rhetoric or analysis, Miss Murray's narrative breaks off, there is a blank space, and a leaf to be turned, and the new chapter starts with cold detachment. There is the air of one playing soft, simple music, where the pauses between the notes are as important as the notes themselves.

But Miss Murray has yet to learn that technique is the instrument and not the end of art. It would be possible to play "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay" with an air of soft impressiveness, as if it were the "Moonlight Sonata." But the result, we fear, would induce laughter, not tears. There are times when Miss Murray's solemn intensity and very visible restraint impress us in this way. We admire the cleverness of her writing, and the skill with which the highly-strung Chloe is analysed. But we do not feel the situation to be important enough for this tenseness of manner. Claude is a hypochondriac quite unreal except as a figment of Chloe's nervous idealism. Chloe of course was very young and a little hysterical; and she is real enough; but we do not see that the hysterical side of her, however cleverly analysed, ever assumes tragic proportions, or is calculated to have more than a pathological interest for adults.

THE CENTAUR. By ALGERNON BLACKWOOD. Macmillan. 6*s.*

This is a magnificent book. Eloquence is magnificent, and Mr. Blackwood is splendidly eloquent in describing the subliminal and Caucasian adventures of his pantheistic Irishman. Pantheism is the most inspiring and comforting of all religions, and can touch in us every key of the cosmic emotion, from Plato's majestical theogonies to Thoreau's quaint remark that he is no more lonely in the forest "than the first spider in a new house." Mr. Blackwood has taken his idea chiefly from Fechner and William James, resuming into the central idea, with a touch of philosophic genius, the latest records of the dissociation and projection of personalities. In the central chapters of the book the current and enthusiasm of his diction, the

splendour of his metaphors, carry us away with Terence O'Malley's yearning for communion with the primitive maternity of Nature. We remember those lines of Lucretius (perhaps more to the point than the mystical aspirations of Novalis, whom Mr. Blackwood quotes so plentifully) :—

> Quare etiam atque etiam maternum nomen adepta
> Terra tenet merito, quoniam genus ipsa creavit
> Humanum atque animal prope certo tempore fudit
> Omne quod in magnis bacchatur montibu' passim . . .

Lucretius too has those same bewildering confusions of spiritual and material by which Mr. Blackwood sometimes lets us see the essential artificiality of his rhapsody. When he lets us see the stitches between the scientific idea and the artistic form one thinks of what Mr. Wells in his short story days would have made of it in twenty pages; or again one loses the illusion in wondering why these emanations of the World-Soul should take the form of Centaurs. In view of Mr. Blackwood's erudition it may not be pedantic to point out that the horse-centaur is a comparatively late artistic convention, *not* known to the most primitive mythology. Everybody should read Mr. Blackwood's plea for Pan and simplicity: but who will want to be a Centaur? *Sed neque Centauri fuerunt* . . . .

AMONG THE IDOLMAKERS. By L. P. JACKS. Williams & Norgate. 5s. net.

"*Omnis determinatio est negatio* is certainly the right principle for defining Tom. Call him Master of Arts if you will, but with the proviso that the diploma indicates everything which Tom Sydenham was not. To think of him is to think of the negative, with what implied affirmative the thinker's philosophy may charitably insert." So writes Mr. Jacks of one of the characters in these sketches of his. Invent for Tom Sydenham all that Tom implies, in the way of education, culture, industry, politics, and one may hear Mr. Jacks' voice, beneath all its whimsicality and charm, with a sharp edge of irony in it as he surveys much that passes for progress to-day. Like his earlier volume "Mad Shepherds," only with a more various humanity for subject, it is possible to read each of the sketches without any occupation, much less pre-occupation, with the thought behind it; but when one has finished the reading, and risen from the sketch, the irony very gently, but none the less forcibly and surely, asserts itself, and we realise that we have been captured unawares. That is to say, the thought behind the sketch is inherent in the point of view taken; seldom more. Once or twice indeed, noticeably in the sketch from which the quotation has been made, "That Sort of Thing," and in "Mary," the point of view intrudes into the proper business of the story in active criticism—even with the faintest suspicion of a tub being thumped. But generally it is not so. Generally it floats about us as an atmosphere, bathing us, and bracing our minds.

Not that the thumping of the tub is, in itself, an ill thing. But it is generally an infallible method of not getting your point (provided your hearers are people of a little spirit), whereas Mr. Jacks' method can generally be relied upon to aim far without your knowledge of the event. Take, for example, the sketch entitled "The Self-Deceivers." There is laughter here, intense, irrepressible laughter, that shall make the mind ache with delight. But who, after reading it, can rise and proceed soberly and pretentiously to discuss the question of determination and free-will? As well as ever we have seen it done, in his sketch Mr. Jacks shows these apparent contradictories to be but different aspects of the same thing, but in so admirable and humorous an illustration that the demonstration cleaves to the thinking mind.

It must not be imagined from this that Mr. Jacks has given us no more than a philosophical outlook—although primarily it certainly is a philosophical outlook. There is not a sketch among the eight that constitute the book that cannot be read with complete enjoyment on its merits as a story.

LIFE. By W. B. TRITES. Wyman & Sons, Ltd. 6*s*.

A stirring and breathless story of love-making and money-making with vivid interludes concerning church pic-nics (on American lines), massage, beauty shops, milliners' shops, theatrical careers for young women, vivisection, bacteria cultivation, bull fights and the immoralities of elderly plutocrats. The book palpitates, pulsates, thrills—the writer will quite fairly expect us to say that. Also it very often jars—jars by needless particularities and careful selection of ugly phrases. It paints its pictures in crude but vivid colours, and is not without a certain effectiveness from its own standpoint.

MAIDS' MONEY. By MRS. HENRY DUDENEY. Heinemann. 6*s*.

A will condemning two old maids of forty, cousins, to live together and refrain from marriage on pain of forfeiting a fortune; a designing doctor, anxious for a rich wife; an insurance clerk, who is both lover and an inventor in need of capital—this sort of thing is very commonplace material for a story of the ingenious-exciting order. But Mrs. Dudeney is never commonplace. In this novel she is very far from being at her best, and that partly because the subject is not worthy of her. Nevertheless she has made something out of it. The two old maids are living together in the uncongenial house in Cornwall; incompatible to the core, the one prim, conventional, sickly, and nasty, the other overflowing with animal spirits and impulsiveness; talking at one another through a concealed natural hostility. They are drawn with a queer realism that is all Mrs. Dudeney's own. But frankly we are a little bored by the artificial plot, the inevitable love-making of the insurance clerk, the inevitable bar to marriage, and

even by Sarah's self-communings when she felt that she had killed the intolerable house-companion who stood in her way. There is here so much spendthrift cleverness; so much good character-drawing wasted. The material is too thin for a story so drawn out. But even so there is abundance of interest to be extracted from the story. There is something garish and fascinating in an almost ghoulish way in the incessant tittle-tattle of these two women, talking over their unhappy past, planning their prosperous future, and shocking or wounding each other in every word they utter.

HISTORY

MEMOIRS AND LETTERS OF THE RIGHT HON. SIR ROBERT MORIER, G.C.B., from 1826 to 1876. By his daughter, Mrs. ROSSLYN WEMYSS. With portraits. Arnold. Two vols. 32s. net.

The interest of these memoirs is exceptional. They bear no resemblance whatever to the familiar volumes of chatter about celebrities which so often pass muster to-day. From a great fund of knowledge of her own, Mrs. Wemyss has filled in the gaps between the masses of letters, memoranda, and reports which Sir Robert Morier made rich from the reservoir of his political knowledge. It is doubtful if any Englishman of the last century understood German and Austrian affairs so thoroughly as Morier, or threw himself with so much enthusiasm into the promotion of a better understanding between Great Britain and the Teutonic countries of Europe. Few men are able to live through the blighting official atmosphere of the Diplomatic service, where it is almost bad form to reveal political enthusiasm of any sort, and emerge from it like Morier, independent in opinion, prodigiously well informed, and an enthusiast both for the details of administration and in the wider imaginative issues of politics. It was a great misfortune to this country that he did not receive, in 1868, the post of Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, whence he had hoped to reform the system by which men are promoted by seniority alone, and the best men who have mastered a subject are either passed over or transferred to a part of the world unknown to them.

He himself deserves to remain with Mr. Bryce, as a permanent example of the advantages of appointing to the Service men who are both educated and intelligent. He was twenty-seven, that is to say seven or eight years older than most budding diplomats, when in 1853 he first joined the Service and was attached to the Embassy at Vienna. He was already a man of formed opinions. He was on the most intimate terms of friendship with that little group of Oxford men among whom Jowett, Stanley, Temple, and Palgrave were conspicuous. He had been to Paris in 1848 to study the Revolution on the spot. He made friends with the statesmen of Schleswig-Holstein

when the duchies were at war with Denmark. Baron Stockmar was his friend, and he had already mastered the complications of German politics and became acquainted with the leading social and political personages in Germany and Austria before he accepted the humble position of unpaid Attaché at Vienna.

Being fitted for his work, he was regarded as unfitted for suitable promotion; and did not become an Ambassador till 1885, though years before he had more knowledge, more personal influence, and more zeal than any British representative in Middle Europe. His capacity was fully recognised by Queen Victoria, who relied much on the information with which he supplied her. It was recognised also at headquarters, for wherever a difficult piece of work involving technical knowledge had to be done, as in the case of the Commission for an Anglo-Austrian Treaty, the missions to Pesth and to Strasburg and Metz, it was Morier who was appointed.

This is a book in which the student may quarry deep; and there is bold, incisive writing, and the expression of much human wisdom that deserve the attention of the general reader.

POETRY

LYRICS AND NARRATIVE POEMS. By HERBERT TRENCH. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 5s. net.

More than any other living poet Mr. Herbert Trench is the successor of Tennyson; not of course in the sense of being at all a disciple; but because he seems to represent for our generation the dignity of the poetical profession, the magnificent claim of the Poet to be concerned with the highest thought of the time. In reading him we are always conscious of a large and resonant personality; and we should not be at all surprised to hear that he wore a purple cloak. Anyone, therefore, who has any interest in the poetical expression of the time (or wonders what a *Zeitgeist* is), should study the volume in which Mr. Trench has now collected and re-arranged with the addition of fifteen new poems, the two books previously published, the *Deirdre Wed and Other Poems* of 1901, and the *New Poems* of 1907. It was in gratitude for that first volume that Yorke Powell welcomed him as "the poet of leaves"; and we may now think it possible that this refers not only to the beautiful *Ode on a Silver Birch*, and to such lyric fragments as the lovely "I put aside the branches . . . .," but also in a more general sense to the whole movement of his verse, rooted in strength, in which we feel a sensitive response to all the sounds of a great forest. There is too, as in the *Stanzas to Tolstoi*, a perception of nature in some universal view, an aspect which involves "what God and Man is." Yorke Powell added that he thought "Lyric Reverie more in Trench's line than epic of the idyllic kind,"

an opinion which, in what it implies, has not been generally accepted. For lyric reverie, if it means anything, means the ode; and in the fourteen Odes which open this book will be found, we think, examples of all Mr. Trench's finest work without any of his characteristic faults. There are passages here of extraordinary beauty; beauty of vision and beauty of workmanship. His power in using the melody of the elaborate double rhyme, as in the lines *To a Dead Poet* (Edgar Allan Poe) is balanced by the delicacy with which he builds rhymed and rhymeless lines into a new stanza form full of the required mystery, in the *Stanzas on Poetry*. He can sometimes use the most majestical diction, a sort of λέξις ἐξηλλαγμένη, without stumbling; and the *Song for the Funeral of a Boy* and the *Song of the Vine* are each perfect in their way. Of the Fifty Lyrical Poems which follow there is no space here to deal at length; but here Mr. Trench's touch is less sure; so at least one feels after reading the fifty in succession, in spite of the beauty of such lyrics as "Almond, wild Almond . . . .," *The Crocus*, *Lindisfarne*, or "Starlight distilleth . . ." In spite of the excellence of these and others, or perhaps because of their instant charm, one is conscious on other pages that Mr. Trench's large emotional manner is apt to overweigh the form. He is apt, that is, at his worst, to smother a woman, or a platitude, with sentimentalism.

One comes then to the narrative poems, and in spite of the general welcome with which *Deirdre Wedded* (or as it was first called, *Deirdre Wed*) was received, one feels that Yorke Powell was right in doubting Mr. Trench's success in "epic of the idyllic kind." It has many passages of remarkable beauty, glowing with music and colour, and the fourth section, *The Voice of Urmael*, has some quite unforgettable pictures of the lake, the island, and the wood of Deirdre's love. But the whole poem is not a perfect whole. In reading *Deirdre* one cannot help thinking of the pathetic embroidered beauties of Claudian's *Rape of Proserpine*. Nor again can we find any consistent merit in *Apollo and the Seaman*, some very remarkable tributes to which are exhibited by the publishers on the wrapper of the book. Mr. Trench's use of allegory appears to me (as in an earlier poem *The Rock of Cloud*), as clumsy, as bewildering, as if in *The Ancient Mariner* the albatross had been explicitly called a Categorical Imperative. There is of course fine thought and clear imagery, especially in the seventh section of the poem. But the whole is a bold failure. This is not the place to discuss the question of the poem's accompaniment by orchestral music. We should like to see Mr. Trench's defence of his short note—"In alliance between the arts of Poetry and Music, and in the philosophic ideas they may together convey, lies, I believe, much of promise for our civilisation." In such a matter the critic's opinion without any justifying discussion carries no weight, so we will only formally register our violent opposition to the proposed alliance.

By the way, why have the publishers issued these collected poems in a sort of pocket-edition format, barely seven inches high?

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

THE OXFORD BOOK OF GERMAN VERSE—FROM THE 12TH TO THE 20TH CENTURY. Edited by H. G. FIEDLER, with a preface by GERHART HAUPTMANN. The Clarendon Press, Oxford. 6s. net.

This book seems to us extraordinarily delightful. From Walther von der Vogelweide onwards, there are here all the poems in German which we have cherished since School days. The earlier part of the book seems almost like a breviary. It is remarkable how near to the heart many of these old German poems lie; almost like the scriptures. We do not question or examine them. Our education seems built on them.

"Geh aus, mein Herz, und suche Freud,
In dieser lieben Sommerzeit
An deines Gottes Gaben . ."

Then again, so many of the poems are known to us as music, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms and Wolf, that the earlier part of the book stands unassailable, beyond question or criticism.

There are very few of the known things that we may complain of missing. Heine's "Thalatta" is not included—but it is foolish to utter one's personal regrets, when so much of the best is given.

For most of us, German poetry ends with Heine. If we know Mörike we are exceptional. In this anthology, however, Heine is finished on page 330, while the last poem in the book, by Schaukal, is on page 532; that is, two hundred pages of 19th century verse. It is a large proportion. And it is this part of the book that, whilst it interests us absorbingly, leaves us in the end undecided and unsatisfied.

Lenau, Keller, Meyer, Storm, Mörike are almost classics. Over the seven pages of Paul Heyse we hesitate uncertainly; would we not rather have given more space to Liliencron, and less to Heyse?—although Liliencron is well represented. But this soldier poet is so straight, so free from the modern artist's hyper-sensitive self-consciousness, that we would have more of him. We wish England had a poet like him, to give grit to our modern verse.

TOD IN ÄHREN.

Im Weizenfeld, in Korn und Mohn
Liegt ein Soldat, unaufgefunden,
Zwei Tage schon, zwei Nächte schon,
Mit schweren Wunden, unverbunden.

Durstüberquält und fieberwild,
Im Todeskampf den Kopf erhoben.
Ein letzter Traum, ein letztes Bild,
Sein brechend Auge schlägt nach oben.

Die Sense sirrt im Ährenfeld,
Er sieht sein Dorf im Arbeitsfrieden.
Ade, ade du Heimatwelt—
Und beugt das Haupt und ist verschieden.

The selections from Dehmel are not so satisfactory. It is not at all certain whether these poems are altogether representative of the author of "Aber die Liebe" and the "Verwandlungen der Venus." Dehmel is a fascinating poet, but he for ever leaves us doubtful in what rank to place him. He is turgid and violent, his music is often harsh, usually discomforting. He seems to lack reserve. It is very difficult to decide upon him. Then suddenly a fragment will win us over:—

NACH EINEM REGEN.

Sieh, der Himmel wird blau;
Die Schwalben jagen sich
Wie Fische über den nassen Birken.
Und du willst weinen?

In deiner Seele werden bald
Die blanken Bäume und blauen Vögel
Ein goldnes Bild sein.
Und du weinst?

Mit meinen Augen
Seh' ich in deinen
Zwei kleine Sonnen,
Und du lächelst.

Hauptmann is dramatic and stirring, Bierbaum sings pleasantly, Max Dauthendey's brief, impersonal sketches have a peculiar power; one returns to them, and they remain in mind. Hofmannsthal, the symbolist, has three very interesting poems. There are many other names, some quite new, and one's interest is keenly roused. It is a question, where so many are admitted, why Geiger and Peter Baum and Elsa Lasker-Schüle have been excluded. But nothing is so easy as to carp at the compiler of an anthology; and no book, for a long time, has given us the pleasure that this has given.

THE MINNESINGERS. By JETHRO BITHELL, M.A. Vol I.—Translations. Longmans Green & Co. 5s. net.

This is a rather large, important-looking volume of translations with a few comparative footnotes, and a brief appendix which is scarcely scholarly, but shows the author has read widely in verse. It is to be followed next autumn by a second volume, a history of Minnesong as compared with the old lyrical poetry of Provence, Portugal and Italy. This second volume, we are told in the preface, is to be the "pièce de résistance."

"These translations," we read, "may be regarded as the by-products of a more painful process—the extraction of parallel passages. The two volumes should, by rights, have appeared together, but the translations were easier, and are finished first."

This considerably damps our ardour. "The translations were easier." It is a phrase that pricks the gay bladder of our enthusiasm.

The book is issued as an independent volume. It is not a scholastic work. It is an anthology, selected at the author's discretion, of translations of the chief of the Minnesong. That is, it is issued to us as a book of poetry. And instead of a book of poetry, we have a book of by-products.

"The translations were easier. . ." As a result, we have a volume of crude, careless English verse which is not often poetry. Nevertheless, the author is so blithe and unconcerned and facile at his task, that the book has a certain charm.

The method of translation, we are told, is the "plaster-cast:" that is, the outward form is strictly preserved. Also the author has striven to be "Sinngetreu" rather than "Wortgetreu;" to be true to the poet's thought rather than to his phrasing. But it is not so easy to be "Sinngetreu." The earlier Minnesingers especially are so naïve and winsome in the expression of their sentiment, that they are not to be translated off-hand. Take the very first verse in the book, and put it side by side with the original—none of the German originals, by the way, are included in this book:

Dû bist mîn, ich bin dîn:	Mine thou art, thine am I:
Des solt dû gewis sîn.	Deem not that in this I lie.
Dû bist beslozzen	Locked thou art
In mînem herzen:	In my heart;
Verlorn is das ſlüzzelîn:	Never canst thou thence depart:
Dû muost immer drinne sîn.	For the key is lost, sweetheart.

The translation may be "Sinngetreu," but it has lost all poetry by the way. Then take the first stanza of Walther von der Vogelweide's well-known "Tantaradei," or "Unter den Linden."

"On the heather-lea,
In the lime-tree bower,
There of us twain was made the bed:
There you may see
Grass-blade and flower
Sweetly crushed and shed.
By the forest, in a dale,
Tantaradei!
Sweetly sang the nightingale."

The translation certainly seems to have been easy, and in making it the author will have made enemies of all who remember the original.

Nevertheless, this blithe facility and unconcern on the author's part does give the book a certain quality, almost a charm of its own. And as the Minnesong goes on, becomes more narrative, more ballad-like, less delicately lyrical, it is easier to translate. There is solid stuff of narrative and of dramatic emotion, that does not vanish away in being conveyed from one language to another. And these

later translations are often made very attractive by the author's irresponsible, artless manner.

In among the Minnesong is a good proportion of Volkslied. A bookful of courtly, mediæval love-song soon cloys. The lays of Marie de France sicken in the end. So the inclusion of coarse, harsh folksong among so much sugar-cream of sentimental love is welcome.

The book is very interesting, in spite of its faults.

THE CHIEF ELIZABETHAN DRAMATISTS EXCLUDING SHAKESPEARE. Edited by WILLIAM ALLAN NEILSON. Ph.D. Cassell. 10*s*. 6*d*. net.

The object of the editor in compiling this excellent and very representative anthology of all the principal dramatists of the Elizabethan period saving Shakespeare, was to provide a work which should represent the drama of that time in a volume which could be used by both general and academic readers alongside of the plays of Shakespeare. The result is undeniably good for the general reader and at least useful as an easy book of reference for the academic, and the student. In the treatment of the text, the editor has followed the principle he adopted in his Shakespeare in the Cambridge Poets Series. Each play has been printed from the most authentic text accessible, and emendations have been made sparingly. The spelling and punctuation have been modernised; but modern stage directions and notes of place at the beginnings of scenes have been relegated to the footnotes, whilst modern divisions of scenes and acts are indicated by brackets. Variant readings are also given in the footnotes; but annotation is always kept within bounds of severe utility, consequently the volume is not burdened by the presence of the commentator as in the case of so many falsely learned editions of the classics. In a series of useful appendices Dr. Neilson has included additional notes regarding the history of each of the plays, biographical sketches and bibliographies of each author, with references to the chief authorities on their works, and there is also a complete index of the characters in the plays. The contents include plays by Lyly, Peele, Greene, Marlowe, Kyd, Chapman, Jonson, Dekker, Marston, Heywood, Beaumont, Fletcher, Webster, Middleton, Massinger, Ford and Shirley. It may be said with certainty that there is no completer, or even handier volume of the plays of Shakespeare's contemporaries; for withal its eight hundred odd pages this book is printed on so fine a paper that it is quite easy to handle. There must be very many lovers of our classical drama who will welcome and treasure a book which contains so much of what is strongest and best of our greatest dramatic period in so comfortable a space.

Although every precaution is taken, the Proprietors will not be responsible for the loss of, damage or any other accidents that may occur to the manuscripts that may be sent in for consideration.

Katherine Mansfield.